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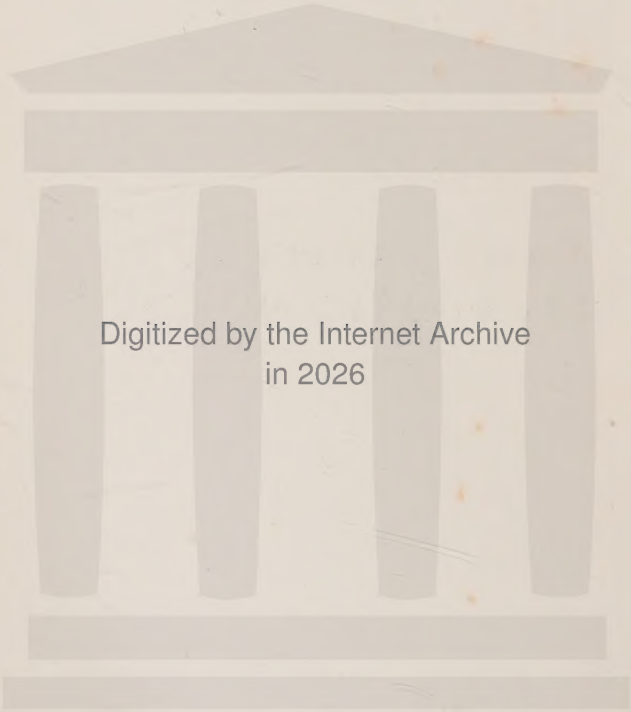
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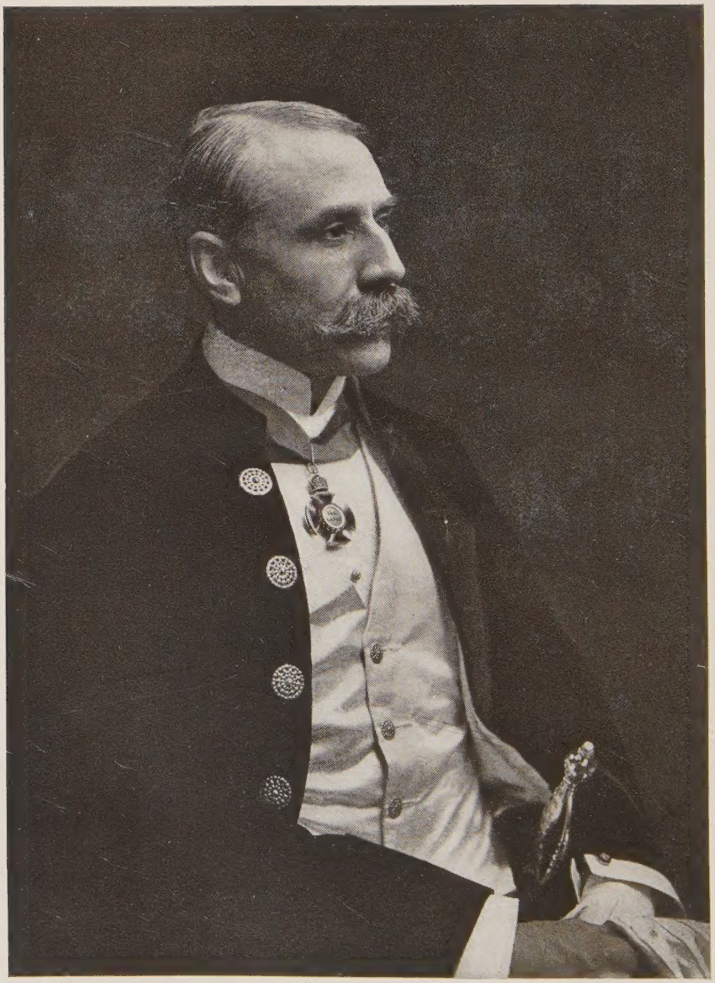

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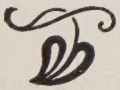
SIR EDWARD ELGAR

THE PROBLEMS OF MODERN MUSIC

BY

ADOLF WEISSMANN

Translated by M. M. BOZMAN



With Portraits of Modern Composers, and an Introduction by

EDWARD J. DENT, M.A.

(*Chairman of International Society for Contemporary Music*)

MCMXXV

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INTRODUCTION

During the last twenty-five years a great change has come over the whole art of music. The history of music tells us that it has always been subject to changes of style such as have occurred continuously in the history of every art; but most people are probably under the impression that the change which we have witnessed recently, and are indeed still witnessing, represents a revolution to which no parallel can be found since the days of Monteverdi. In spite of all the efforts at its interpretation made by the small band of critical enthusiasts, the average music-lover is uncomfortably conscious of living in a state of complete musical chaos, a chaos indeed made still more chaotic by the fact that the prophets of the various new movements are often in the most violent disagreement with each other. Whatever opinions may be formed as to the actual merit of the music produced to-day, it is undoubtedly true that no such general upheaval has taken place in the art for three centuries. The war of the pamphleteers over Gluck and Piccinni was a mere ebullition of journalism; the wrath and fury expended on Wagner and the "music of the future" is near enough to our own day to be remembered by many still living, yet remote enough to be viewed as a historical episode of much the same type. We listen to Bach and Handel, to Mozart and Beethoven still, and come to the conclusion that these so-called revolutions made very little difference to the ordered development of music. We listen to Beethoven and think of him as "fixed in his everlasting seat," though there are bold spirits at this moment who proclaim him to be no more than a "great Dagon." Those who reverence him most devoutly hardly

realise that he inaugurated a revolution in music more fundamental than that of either Gluck or Wagner.

It may seem strange that whereas music is in some ways the most immediate of all the arts in its appeal to the emotions, it is also the art which is the least successful in making itself understood by its contemporary public. It has been said over and over again that the artist, in every art, is always in advance of his public; but in all probability the proportion of poetry-lovers who enjoy modern poetry, and of picture-lovers who appreciate modern painting, is far greater than that of the music-lovers who enter into the spirit of contemporary music. How far this has always been the case is difficult to estimate. Mozart and Beethoven bewildered their own listeners, just as Wagner did. Bach's music was a sealed book even to his own sons, but Handel and Purcell were on the whole distinctly popular in their own day. The reason for this more modern misunderstanding of music is probably that listeners do not know what they want to get from it. It is not certain that composers always know what they themselves want to express. And whatever they may at different times have wanted to express, it is certain that the "meaning" of music has become a matter of increasing complexity during the last hundred years.

The musical revolution of 1600 was a revolution in the technique of composition. At any rate, we can study and interpret it as such. If so, it must have represented a profound change in the emotional significance of music; but this is a phenomenon which it is extremely difficult to analyse and explain. The revolution of our own time is also a change in technique, but we ourselves, living in the midst of it, are conscious of it far more acutely as a change in emotional significance, and the critics of it have devoted their main energies to this aspect of its interpretation.

But a revolution, however exciting a spectacle it may

provide for those who live in the midst of it, is no more than the liberation of forces long pent up, and if we are to understand the nature of our own musical revolution rightly, we must trace the past history of those disruptive forces back to their origins. It is this careful analysis of the antecedent causes which gives its peculiar value to Professor Weissmann's study of modern music. The author is not one of those old-fashioned German professors who used to map out the entire cosmos from between the four walls of their own libraries. That he is a man of learning goes without saying—is he not a German? But he lives continuously in the thick of the musical *mêlée* as one of the leading musical critics of Berlin, and he is a man who has travelled extensively and come into personal contact with the music and the musicians of many countries outside his own. He says in his preface that music for him is always an "experience," and we can certainly see in every line of his book how intensely vivid that experience is for him. Whenever he mentions any musical work we feel at once that he calls up for himself a clear and passionate recollection of its actual sounds, and it is evident that he expects the same power of imaginative evocation from his readers.

The English reader will probably turn first to the chapter in which Professor Weissmann discusses the English music of to-day, and may very likely feel a certain disappointment at the small amount of space which he has given to the subject. This is not the place to criticise the author's critical opinions, but in these days of somewhat exaggerated musical patriotism, it may be no bad thing for us to be told a few disagreeable home-truths. We hear them sometimes, indeed, from our own countrymen, expressed too with more plainness of speech and with less breadth of view and less desire to enter sympathetically into our national idiosyncrasy than is shown by this diligent foreign investigator.

Professor Weissmann's book, when it first appeared in Germany in 1922, was a very remarkable achievement on the part of a German critic, who during the years of war and for some time afterwards had been entirely cut off from musical intercourse with other lands. It was a remarkable thing that a German writer should at that particular moment have produced a book so entirely free from the least trace of nationalistic prejudice, and remarkable too that he should have acquired, in circumstances of such practical difficulty, so wide and comprehensive a knowledge of the musical activities of foreign countries. During these last three years he has continued to add to this knowledge, and this English version of his book includes a good deal of new material. To those English readers whose national vanity may be wounded by his criticism of English music, it may be observed that this is the first book on modern music, by a foreign writer, which takes modern England seriously as one of the world's musical nations. It is only a few years since there appeared in Germany a book about England with the title *Das Land ohne Musik*.

Notwithstanding all his cosmopolitanism, Professor Weissmann remains a German. It is impossible, and it would indeed be unreasonable, for any fellow-countryman of Bach, Beethoven, Wagner and Brahms, not to take it for granted that the history of classical and romantic music is in its main course a history of German music. And one of the most interesting things about this book is its subconscious exposition of the German mentality towards music as a whole. The author criticises German music, be it of the past or of the present, no less ruthlessly than he does the music of other countries; it may well be imagined that he has given far more offence at home than he will do on this side of the Rhine. The deadliest insult that any German reviewer can hurl at an author is to say that his book is *subjektiv*. In England we set more value on personality, and it is just because this book is

the expression of an individual mind that we may well give it a very cordial welcome. It is the expression of an individual mind and of a representative mind too, for we can learn from it what complete changes of opinion are taking place in the new Germany with regard to the art of the past century. The days of Brahms and Wagner are definitely over and gone. Richard Strauss remains as the one surviving link with the nineteenth century. The new age has developed a certain cult of Bruckner, Mahler, Reger and Pfitzner, each of whom has his particular congregation of devotees, but it will be seen that Professor Weissmann has no illusions about them. He assigns to each his due place in the history of modern developments; he shows a very cordial appreciation of such vital contributions as they may have made to it, but he lays his finger unerringly on their weak spots. Indeed, if we read his book carefully from beginning to end, we shall probably come to the conclusion that he is more sceptical as regards German music than about that of the outer world.

There are certain aspects of the German musical mind which require explanation to the English reader. Certain words and phrases recur frequently in the original German of this book which it is practically impossible to translate into exact equivalents. The task of the translator has, in fact, been singularly difficult; the concentrated energy of the original—a strange contrast to the rambling and leisurely philosophising of an earlier generation of German writers—is hardly reproduceable in English, mainly for the reason that English music-lovers, however profound their devotion to the art, are less inclined than those of Germany to enter fanatically into critical controversy. It is only on the subject of politics or religion that English people can approach a state of Dionysiac frenzy; our music and our musical criticism we take in a more amiable mood. That is in itself a criticism of our musical mentality, and Professor Weissmann too has pointed out

to be seen in Dvořák, whose music has always enjoyed far more popularity in England than in Germany.

At the present moment we English, having a natural bias towards the voice as the most immediate source of musical sound, and in addition an acquired tendency to look for general culture in our leaders of music, are inclined to be somewhat suspicious of the born fiddler, if not actually hostile towards him. Fiddling, we feel, all too easily becomes a sort of disease; it is precisely *das Musikantische* which repels us, even if we are momentarily fascinated by it, in such music as the symphonies of Mahler. If we are modern enough to be interested in the interpretation of modern states of mind, we are disconcerted by this throw-back to a more primitive phase of the art, all the more so because we suspect it of being a pose as well. In the eighteenth century the born fiddler had his place; and he was kept in his place very properly too by his aristocratic patron.

It is Beethoven, according to Professor Weissmann, who definitely sets German music on the instrumental path. But *das Musikantische* is not the key to Beethoven's personality. He lived in an age of political revolution and an age of philosophy. Whatever the younger generation may think of his compositions, he remains a great figure in the political and philosophical history of music. He marks the moment when the musician ceased to be the servant of a prince and became the leader of a nation. And to be the leader of a nation he had to be a philosopher, for the *Musikant* can never be a leader. Beethoven started the tendency of the whole nineteenth century to look up to the musician as a prophet. He made the world expect higher things of the musician than he had ever before been called upon to achieve. The *Musikant* descended to a worse servitude than before, and rightly enough; are we rats that we should be led by a pied piper? Yet Beethoven could not altogether destroy the old type of guild musician.

The Germany of the mid-nineteenth century was full of them, fiddling away industriously in their little court orchestras and composing innumerable and hopelessly uninspired symphonies in their spare time. But after one great prophet had arisen, more were expected, and one result of the change of attitude towards the musician in Germany has been the tendency of every little scribbler to regard himself as a prophet, and the tendency of music-lovers in general to exhibit a ludicrously exaggerated reverence for the artist—a reverence, it need hardly be said, which the artist, and especially the charlatan, has lost no time in exploiting to the full.

The emancipation of the artist from servitude and the increased public attention which he derives from the ever-increasing activity of the Press, and of all the commercial machinery of the music-trade, encourage him to self-revelation of more and more intimate character, even to what in recent times has become little short of pathological "exhibitionism." A new quality comes into music—what Professor Weissmann calls *das Reizsame*. This is another word which it is difficult to translate. The word *Reiz* is generally translated by "charm," but its real meaning is itch or irritation. We see this quality most clearly emerging in the music of Chopin, and the very name of Chopin is enough to evoke in most readers a memory of this peculiar appeal to the nervous sensibility. Half a century ago there were musicians who stigmatised Chopin's music as morbid and decadent. We are not nowadays dangerously affected by the erotic element in Chopin, but we can see that from these beginnings there gradually developed that preoccupation with sexual passion which is to be observed in Wagner and in many later composers. It is a difficult subject to discuss, not from reasons of prudery so much as from the fact that the erotic appeal of music varies with the individual temperament of every listener.

German writers approach the subject in a more frank and scientific spirit than English critics. They regard the erotic instinct as a sign of health rather than of decadence, and though they do not hesitate to condemn morbidity when they see it, they welcome robust natural passion as a salutary corrective to over-intellectualism. Here the *Musikant* comes into his own again, for he represents the natural man, the man who acts upon instinct and is not troubled by philosophical problems. Hence Professor Weissmann's conviction that Richard Strauss with all his weaknesses is still the greatest living force in music.

This brings us to two more words which are especially characteristic of modern German musical criticism—*problematisch* and *dämonisch*. They are summed up in the name of Faust, for Goethe's immortal tragedy forms the background of every educated German mind. One might almost say that "Faust" is for Germany what the Bible and Shakespeare together are for England. Faust is the eternal seeker. *Niente è provato, niente è provabile*, wrote Busoni on the title-page of his own *Doctor Faust*; but though he has proved nothing and never can prove anything, Faust goes on seeking all the same. It is that passionate striving towards the unknown which is at the root of German character, and the motive force of all the most supreme artistic and intellectual accomplishments of Germany. Bruckner, the man who knew no problems, but was content with faith in the doctrines of the Catholic Church, remains kneeling by the wayside; the others approach him as they climb the hill, stay perhaps a moment to ask the way, but leave him behind as they struggle on. They are scourged like Egmont by unseen spirits. Faith means petrifaction. The dæmon drives them eternally onwards.

But *problematisch* and *dämonisch* are rapidly becoming *clichés* not merely in journalism but in music as well. Professor Weissmann has no illusions about the music of young

Germany. Nevertheless he comes home from his visits to Paris, Rome and London with the conviction that, however gifted these foreign composers may be, however fascinating and attractive their music, there is something wanting. They have much that Germany might do well to borrow, but they are no disciples of Faust. They are no seekers after ultimate truth. And even if young Germany, bewildered and disorganised in soul as the result of peace and its economic consequences, may seem to have lost for the time being the musical hegemony of the world, he feels confident in the future, as long as Faust points the way.

English music, formerly nurtured in German discipline, has recently turned in other directions. Political movements have in reality had little or nothing to do with this new orientation. The reaction against German music was simply a reaction against the whole art of the nineteenth century, a reaction which, as this book plainly shows, has been as energetic in Germany as it was over here. It has affected only the small body of what we may call advanced musical enthusiasts; the "great heart of the people" still goes out to Beethoven, Wagner and even to Brahms, both in England and in Germany too. But Professor Weissmann writes about the leaders of music, and I write this introduction for those English people who are interested in them and are convinced that the days when England could with some justification be called the land without music are past and gone, let us hope for ever. The value of this book for us does not lie in its criticism of this or that contemporary composer; it lies in its general idealistic outlook. It illustrates the attitude of the German mind towards music, and thereby invites us to ask ourselves what is the attitude of the English mind towards it and what attitude we ought to set ourselves to assume.

The typical German intellectual is inclined to say that all

English art is more or less what German slang calls *Kitsch*—commercial art, the "pretty-pretty," the art of the chocolate-box—but he will admit that for those who want *Kitsch* there is no *Kitsch* so supremely well produced in its way as that of England. The Englishman, on the other hand, receives the impression that the German intellectual is the victim of a sort of persecution-mania which causes him to fly in terror from anything which approaches the conventional standards of beauty. But it is none the less true that English art, and especially English music, has not yet quite shaken off the Victorian habit of "looking at life from the drawing-room window." English music, for all the progress that has been made during the last forty years, is still badly in need of real leaders. The *Musikant*, therefore, the born fiddler, is of no use whatever to us. He does exist in this country, though he is not a very common type, just as the old-fashioned guild musician survives to a certain extent; but neither of them can lead us. The trouble with our leaders is this—that since they are bound to be men of general culture and also men of lofty ideals of life, for otherwise they could not be true leaders, they are also too often inhibited by these very qualities from exercising to the full that influence which they ought to bring to bear with overmastering force upon the musical life of England. A supreme egotist like Wagner is unthinkable in this country, for under our educational system no Englishman, however gifted he might be as regards musical inspiration, could ever attain to Wagner's immense intellectual culture without at the same time acquiring a social sense in relation to his fellow-creatures which would inevitably either restrain his egotism or at least compel him to disguise it. We are not without our complete egotists in music, but they are negligible factors in our musical life, for their lack both of social responsibility and of general culture makes their musical production merely trivial. Our real leaders, even so great a

leader as Hubert Parry, have suffered from too much modesty and from too tender-hearted a fear of giving offence.

It is exaggerated modesty—one might almost say shyness—that has kept many of our real leaders concentrated exclusively upon a purely native circle of followers. English music has remained too long within its own frontiers. It is no longer true to say that the Continent takes no interest in English music, still less that the Continent refuses altogether to believe in its existence. But the Continent is so copiously provided with music of its own, and its commercial methods are so elaborately organised, that English music does indeed stand little chance of even an occasional Continental hearing so long as English composers and English music-publishers sit at home patiently waiting for invitations from abroad. With the commercial aspect of the matter I am not concerned here. But it is obvious that all the leading Continental composers—to say nothing of the innumerable conductors and executants—are doing their best to get some sort of a hearing in England and America, in the hopes that their names may some day be household words in those countries just as familiar as those of Bach and Beethoven. This ambition, at any rate on the part of the composers, is not to be dismissed as merely commercial. It springs largely from a desire to address the whole world of musical people, and partly perhaps from a desire to spread in other countries the cultural ideas of the composer's own native environment. Nor does this ambition by any means involve a feeble cosmopolitanism of style. We may feel reasonably certain that when Mr. Delius writes a new work he expects it to be received with as much interest in Germany or America, perhaps in France too, as in England. Yet we are proud to own him as an English composer, and happy to feel, as we listen to his music, that it represents our own peculiar outlook on life. We ought surely to feel happy too in the thought that he is interpreting our outlook on life

to people of other countries who may perhaps understand us more intimately through this music of ours than through books and pictures.

I am not suggesting that we should send out expeditions to the Continent to force English music down the unwilling throats of all foreigners. They have had quite enough, as it is, of the wrong kind of English music. It has been the wrong kind, even when it was meritorious work in itself, because it was obviously composed for purely English audiences. We may learn from Professor Weissmann's book something of what makes the difference between music written for a single country and music written, as Beethoven's was, for all the world. It might be possible to reduce this difference to a statement of technical principles, but that is a problem for the composers themselves rather than for the general reader. The general reader, and perhaps the composer too, may understand the matter more clearly by a parallel example. If one has to write something with the intention of its being translated into a foreign language, one must be as careful as possible to avoid using any phrase or expression which is intended to evoke other associations familiar to one's own readers, but not the common property of the world, whether these associations be literary, historical, religious, or merely local and topical. This is a bitter sacrifice for the fluent journalist, for it may deprive his style of most of its wonted piquancy and charm. But as the sacrifice involves the clearest possible thinking and the clearest possible expression of the thought in the plainest and simplest words, it ought to produce a very notable improvement in the writer's English, and if he is not able to impress his own personality, as well as his national habit of thought, on the simplest and clearest language, he is obviously a very incompetent writer. The same principle can be applied to musical composition with similar benefit. Composers make use of just the same sort of familiar allusion, tricks of phrase

which endear them all the more to their local audiences. But those tricks of phrase are in music, just as in literature, nothing but *clichés*. When they cross the Channel they are either entirely unintelligible or else they give themselves away as *clichés* at once. For the cosmopolitan *cliché*, both in literature and in music, is even more dangerous than the local one. Nothing is easier to translate than the average political leading article of a respectable newspaper, because it is all made up of international *clichés*. In music the international *cliché* is derived chiefly from reminiscences of Bach and Liszt. It is to be observed at its most effective brilliance in the works of Saint-Saëns.

It is a curious fact that in spite of the German interest in *das Problematische*, German reviewers do not by any means approve of books which raise problems and leave them for their readers to answer. Still, that is what Professor Weissmann does, and here again his English readers will probably like him all the better for it. And for us the most important of his problems is: what contribution is England going to make towards the reorganisation of the world's musical chaos? On our practical solution of that problem depends the future of English music—and perhaps of the world's too—if we had the courage to face it straightly.

EDWARD J. DENT.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This book is the fruit of an intimate and varied experience of modern music, and embodies an attempt to give an account of its manifold aspects without pretending to complete impartiality. I am deeply interested in the problems of contemporary music, particularly those of the "expressionist" school. Therefore many of the more successful composers are barely mentioned, while others are more fully discussed. The origins of music, as a means of elucidating the present crisis, and the circumstances of its production are indicated, but the supreme importance of the personality of the composer is emphasised from first to last.

The survey of contemporary music is made as complete as possible, for all nations participate in the artistic crisis and will play a part in future developments. Music as an *experience* is the keynote of my work, and I deal with its problems rather than with its literature.

ADOLF WEISSMANN.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION v

AUTHOR'S PREFACE xxi

PART I. THE MODERN ENVIRONMENT

CHAP.

I. SENSE AND SENSIBILITY 3

II. THE MUSIC MARKET 28

III. ART AND ARTIFICE 48

PART II. COMPOSERS AND THEIR WORK

IV. THE WAGNERIAN SCHOOL 67

V. THE FAITH OF ANTON BRUCKNER 79

VI. THE DIDACTICISM OF HANS PFITZNER 86

VII. FOLK-MUSIC 95

VIII. GUSTAV MAHLER 103

IX. FROM BRAHMS TO REGER 116

X. RICHARD STRAUSS 126

XI. DEBUSSY AND THE IMPRESSIONISTS 151

XII. EXPRESSIONISM AND ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG 175

XIII. WORLD MUSIC:

General Characteristics 184

Delius as Mediator 188

England 190

France 195

Italy 197

Other European Countries 201

Germany and Austria 208

The Influence of Busoni 217

America 219

Conclusion 223

XIV. SOME ASPECTS OF MODERN MUSIC 224

XV. MUSIC AND THE AGE 236

INDEX 241

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Sir Edward Elgar	*Frontispiece*
	Facing page
Hans Pfitzner	86
Gustav Mahler	106
After the bust by Auguste Rodin	
Max Reger	128
Richard Strauss	128
Claude Debussy upon his Death-Bed	154
Arnold Schönberg	176
Arnold Bax	192
Franz Schreker	210
After an etching by H. Gottselig	

PART I

THE MODERN ENVIRONMENT

THE PROBLEMS OF MODERN MUSIC

CHAPTER I

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

The conflicts of the age in which we live are no less spiritual and intellectual than international and social. The modern man is a battleground of new forces, new impulses, which are striving for a part in his psychic life to the detriment of his strength and purposefulness. In music, these attributes of the will are represented by rhythm; and rhythm has weakened and declined as the super-acute sensibilities of the modern temperament have sought musical expression. There has been a corresponding decline in the constructive idea in music, which is closely connected with rhythm, for a hesitant and over-refined type of humanity demands art of a like quality. For the present, the great battle between form and content—a matter of absorbing interest—stands at a deadlock.

There is no doubt that the constructive power of rhythm in conflict with the refining influence of harmony has, in the recent past, produced extraordinarily attractive music, and has led to the discovery of a new and wonderful musical world; but great music cannot be based on "charm" alone, and the creative spirit in man has sought and is seeking to evoke form and order from artistic chaos. There has been a corresponding battle between sensationalism and intellectualism in the realm of philosophy. In art, as in life, men have tended to become more conscientious as they have

become more self-conscious. History teaches that few works of art survive, and suggests that only certain select ideas, artistically expressed in a very special way, retain their value for succeeding generations. From the early years of the nineteenth century the spread of education, the increasing sense of citizenship, did much to modify the "guild" spirit of the musician, to destroy the isolation which had been at once a limitation and a source of strength to the profession, and to make the composer familiar with literary as well as musical expression. The immediate result was spiritual schism. The older idea of music as a moving pattern in sound—a pleasurable end in itself—began to appear a mere aesthetic dream in the light of a new desire to make it a vehicle of expression, while at the same time the love of beautiful sounds for their own sake was exceedingly strong, being apparently almost inseparable from the craftsmanship and technique of the art. Another aspect of music had, however, already been made prominent by its long association with lyric poetry. Franz Schubert wrote great and expressive music under the inspiration of Goethe's *Prometheus* and *An Schwager Kronos*, though he could at other times sink to the level of the Viennese street-ballad. In these songs his sensibilities, his emotions, as apart from his purely musical sense, are creative, while his texture, hovering between major and minor and full of startling modulations, is exceedingly "modern."

As a more sensitive, temperamental type developed, tone began to acquire colour-value. The fact first emerged in the crisp pianoforte style of Robert Schumann, an innate and prolific musician, who was also something of a poet, while in Chopin's imaginative pianoforte work, tone and colour are so closely united that clear visual images arise spontaneously in the mind of the listener. His *Mazurkas* exemplify this in a very striking way; their musical compactness and brevity intensifying the brilliance of their colour. In Schumann's

Carnival and Chopin's *Mazurkas*, the union of tone and colour, dimly sought in previous ages, became at last an active force in music. It was achieved unconsciously, for these two composers of the Romantic school were following a purely musical impulse. They did not calculate upon the effect of colour when composing, but they achieved the miracle of coloured tone subconsciously. Certain poets, such as Tieck, had already worked consciously towards this end; but Schumann and Chopin, though they recognised the link between music and poetry, never sought inspiration directly in the painter's art. Yet the hour was at hand when composers were to awake to the connection between tone and colour, music and painting, and were thereafter to use colour consciously as an essential element in the art of music. In Schumann, Schubert and Chopin, it was a strong but still unrecognised influence. They sought no inspiration in the visual sense, but as they worked in the narrow range of the keyboard, their consciousness dominated by a purely musical conception of form answerable at the tribunal of the ear alone, deep in their subconsciousness, colour perceptions were stirring, shaping their work to ends beyond their ken.

The French mind, with its quick apprehension of truth, its susceptibility to sense-impressions, its natural bent to the visual arts, was first to perceive the intimate connection existing between tone and colour, between music and painting. Theatrical art, in which the whole body and soul of a man are used as a medium of artistic expression, flourished exceedingly on French soil, and the great Court Ballets were witness to the fact that music and painting are closely akin. Rococo art is essentially the same, whether given to the eye by Watteau or to the ear by Couperin. French clear-sightedness is, however, partly counter-balanced by the self-satisfaction and complacency which persists even in their devotion to music. This destroys the simplicity of their work and tends

to substitute mere virtuosity and artificiality for real inner worth. The German, on the contrary, has earnestness enough to give depth to his music, but his reasoning powers are frequently clouded by sentiment, and he thus lagged far behind in the realisation of the unity of the arts, which was clearly grasped and acted upon in France during the first half of the nineteenth century. There the existing divorce between painting and music was recognised, and the newly-awakened artistic sensibilities began a conscious attempt to effect a reunion, to enhance the value of tone by allying it with colour on the principle of their underlying unity. At the same time a new development in visual art called a new system of aesthetics into being. The French Romantics had cultivated susceptibility to colour; in the light of the writings of such men as Lamartine and Chateaubriand, Delacroix acquired a fresh angle of vision. Aesthetic criticism kept pace with the new movement, possibly outstripped it; and the varied and stimulating intellectual life of Paris raised the level of artistic sensibility and judgment.

Hector Berlioz was a type of the new artist-musician. He appeared with a certain symbolic fitness at a moment when Paris was hearing Beethoven's symphonies under the German conductor, Habenech, but assimilating very little of their meaning. As a Frenchman, endowed with the new artistic perceptions, Berlioz needed just this experience of symphonic perfection to lift him above his racial limitations, and in the resultant fusion of the most absolute musical impressions with the new aesthetic sensibility, the unity of the arts became a part of conscious thought.

Setting out from entirely different standpoints, Beethoven and Berlioz found common ground in the orchestra. Berlioz idolised Beethoven, yet he initiated an entirely contrary musical development. Beethoven in his preface to the *Pastoral Symphony* calls it an expression of feeling rather than a

picture, but a comparison with the *Scène aux Champs* in Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* reveals a world of difference in the two. Beethoven sets down the musical thoughts arising in a perfectly simple "awareness" of nature, while Berlioz's wood-wind expresses the sum of pleasant visual and auditory impressions received by a sensitive town-dweller when visiting the country. In this, as in all his work, he is never for a moment unself-conscious, and it is typical of him that he once planned a symphony with reference to his beloved Ophelia. He calculated on the emotional effect of each instrument with intense care, was not always above a cheap effect, and took an exaggerated delight in shocking his audience.

The way was now clear for the use of tone-colour as an end in itself. Music gained and also lost something as the tendencies of the age were focussed within it. The newly-acquired colour-sense enriched the sources of creative impulse, yet the same temperamental awakening which brought this about caused an increase of self-consciousness, a hypercritical spirit, which robbed musical thought of much of its freshness. Increase of culture and self-criticism in the artist, the pursuit of novelty, produced great work but ended the age of innocence in music. The greater men, as always, still achieved unity of form and content, but the new colourism lent meretricious brilliance to much inferior work.

The orchestra was adapted in various ways, by novel grouping, increased use of wind and percussion instruments, and development of solo parts, to express the new appeal to the combined senses of sight and hearing. Disputes as to orchestral essentials and non-essentials were carried on with increasing acumen among the disputants, and there were many shades of opinion. The nineteenth century saw an astonishing development of technical and material resources, and it is not surprising that men were dazzled by these things and tended to overvalue them.

Berlioz stood at the parting of the ways, and had, indeed, himself initiated the divergence, but his devotion to Beethoven prevented him from doing more than indicate the new musical direction. Liszt, Hungarian by birth, French by adoption and German by choice, was the destined leader of the new music. In him the artistic energies of his time were concentrated as in a burning-glass. He became a rallying-point of a new international community of art and intellect, and in him musicianship was linked with general culture. The stimulating, if sometimes superficial, Parisian world in which he moved, formed a thousand new associations in his exceedingly quick and sensitive mind. Literature and philosophy left their mark upon him. His nature was partly original and partly imitative. Paganini's genius fascinated him and he himself aimed at and achieved a high degree of virtuosity as a pianist. He deliberately sought emotional intoxication, yet his dominating intellect never lost control.

Constructive and destructive elements in the new movement were clearly revealed in Liszt. His eager imagination saw the experiences of life and the arts as the means of enriching music, but the very quantity and variety of the mental material thus accumulated over-developed his self-consciousness, over-strained his powers and endangered the spontaneity of his work.

Tone-colour was no sooner an established fact than means were sought to explore its possibilities and exploit its charm to the full. Increasing technical perfection in the instrument increased the range of colour at command. Higher ends, moreover, were served than mere delight in gay colour. It was now possible to mirror the world of nature and of art in music far more clearly, and the things of the mind also, even irony, satire, and caricature. The Mephistophelian spirit (foreshadowed in the capricious leaps of the E-flat clarinet, and in the "Witches' Sabbath" of the *Symphonie Fantastique*)

was introduced by Liszt into music in the grand manner. Criticism took its place beside emotion in music; the twentieth century is perhaps doing its best and most original work in the intellectual, unemotional *scherzo*.

As a side issue, it may be noted that the new orchestral colour had a modifying and enriching effect upon pianoforte music. When Liszt arranged Berlioz's fantastic symphony for the piano, he made that instrument an echo of the orchestra. It had shown its colouristic capacity in the work of the Romantics, Schumann and Chopin, and it now attained a further superficial development; but its enhanced usefulness as a medium for pianoforte arrangements of orchestral work of the most elaborate kind injured, to some extent, its individual quality.

All the new methods were used at once in programme-music, which began early to show signs of disruption. Composers applied the new and attractive discovery of tone-colour to one field of musical expression after another. Their work tended to become superficial, for the two inspirational sources mingled and clouded their music; so that, instead of attaining to the meaning behind graphic art, it remained often enough, after the expenditure of much energy, merely graphic. In this it differed from all earlier music, in which tone-painting had never been more than a diversion.

Liszt never attained the goal which he set before him. The imitative side of his nature, which sought to kindle imagination through memory, was perpetually at war with the creative and original side, which needed rather to exclude every borrowed thought; while his speculative mind, his readiness to assimilate new experience, besides encroaching on the purely musical idea, were insufficiently supported by technical skill to issue in any perfect work of art. The very virtuosity which had extracted such magic from the keys was a hindrance to him, making him a skilful arranger of

the work of others rather than an original composer. Nevertheless the most valuable ideas of his period are traceable to him. He stood for the unity of the arts; his tone-colourism prepared the way for future developments in musical material, and, through the union of West and Middle Europe in his mind and person, he heralded the greatest creative genius of the nineteenth century.

In Richard Wagner all the aspirations of the new temperament were fulfilled. He was essentially unlike any previous type of musician; he was not indeed a "musician's musician" at all. He found inspiration, not in purely musical ideas, but in the manifold interests to which his quick perceptions and highly-developed nervous system provided the key, and which he afterwards made his own by right of knowledge and intellectual grasp. The whole went to nourish a sensuous love of the theatre. With the stage as his chosen medium he worked methodically to reconcile opposites and to exploit yet further the enchanting possibilities of newly-discovered tone-colour; but his work rests on a basis of ethical and metaphysical ideas, and Wagner's particular blend of ethics, metaphysics and learning is a marvellous thing. He achieved it by withdrawing into himself, by suffering no distractions, by waiting in patience, and then, when the time was ripe, putting the whole force of his personality into the creative act. He produced his works at long intervals. Not only did he master and co-ordinate his many interests into significant unity, but he claimed the whole of human culture as his province, grasped the most divergent departments of mental activity and interpreted them through the medium of sensuous music to the men of his day. The age of innocence was indeed lost, but in *Tristan*, which expounded the supernatural with all the persuasive power of sensuous music, the Romantic movement found its apotheosis.

On the technical side the new music had now freed itself

from the established forms and rhythms of classical music, from the convention of the sonata; it had become varied in colour but infirm of purpose. It had taken several generations to perfect the sonata-form, and there followed a time of sensuous reaction in which linear polyphony with its far-reaching intellectual possibilities was found unsatisfying to the ear and was abandoned in favour of sheer pleasure in instrumental tone and in the virtuosity which could exploit it. Music was to be rebuilt on a grand scale, and the old scaffolding of the fugue, which had served Bach to express his mystic impersonal vision, was discarded. The sonata was based on the rhythm of life as it had come down to it from the older forms of march, dance and song. A very vital will, rooted in a lofty type of sensuousness, had subordinated other elements in music—such as melody and harmony—to the power of a rhythm which was closely bound up with man's physical being. When this rhythm originally became victorious in music it had replaced the old horizontal method by vertical treatment. The old thorough-bass had prepared the way for the "chord" which was now a force in music, and its importance naturally increased as the ear became more sensitive, as instrumental tone collectively and individually increased in charm, and as the human voice began to be used to the full. At the same time, the chord became a powerful means of emotional expression. For a short time, a few decades perhaps, it remained subordinate to rhythmic construction, so that the symmetry of a form which had developed from the simplest elements to the sonata was still undisturbed. But further possibilities in the chord were soon perceived. The emotional force of the leading-note, of suspensions, of chromatic progressions within the boundaries of the key-system, led gradually and inevitably to the undermining of rhythm, the expression of purpose, by harmony, the expression of emotional excitement, and this was

intensified all the more when the singing voice found its power of expression enhanced and enriched by changing harmonies.

The struggle between strength of will and emotional excitement, between rhythm and harmony, is perceptible in the "development" sections of Beethoven's pianoforte sonatas. His genius wrestles mightily with the problem of reconciling constructive stability with self-expression. Emotion tears the *motiv* to pieces and appears to destroy symmetry. Rhythms are opposed and modulation is rapid, but the composer's constructive and rhythmic instinct controls his imagination and attains unity. Recapitulation, long deferred, is hinted at and at last achieved; yet the more progressive element in his work shows that the new sensibilities had come to life in Beethoven. The "development" which shows the conflict between sense and sensibility extends to other parts of the sonata. There are amplifications and extensions. We come to the Beethoven of the later sonatas and quartets. The form is apparently preserved, is recognisable in its main features, but emotion has wrought drastic changes. Beethoven, not greatly daring, turns back to the old musical forms of Bach and writes a series of fugues of intense critical significance. At the height of his emotional transfiguration, striving passionately towards the beyond, he forces himself into the stereotyped framework of systematic polyphony. The fugues express his despairing struggle.

Beethoven's melodic style contained the first hint of a disturbance of balance in the musical elements. His two-bar rhythm was powerful enough to clothe his creative idea in suitable and definite form without rendering it less personal; he foresaw in advance the character of every work that he conceived, and the conscientiousness with which he tested the value of his idea is unparalleled. It had to prove its worth by reference to an underlying intellectual conception

which the composer earnestly desired to express, and it had also to satisfy a metaphysical ideal of form. This sense of responsibility increased as his work developed, and his difficulties increased with it. His imagination was dominated by a strict sense of logic, and the themes and motives which seem capable of such endless development were the result of the pains he took with his imaginative material; while the sense of logic itself originated in a paramount rhythmic instinct which trusted implicitly to duple time and used it to the full. The new spirit affected Beethoven's melody more markedly than other elements in his music. In the slower movements it still moved with comparative ease, but even there it paid for its great intensity by loss of its former untroubled quality, foreshadowing much in modern music. Psychic inhibitions began to trouble Beethoven's apparently incorruptible rhythm. It remained a constructive force, consciously employed, but extension of certain parts of the sonata brought syncopation and the shifting of emphasis in their train. The variety of his rhythms in the development sections was symptomatic of the crisis. Little by little the *rubato* takes on increasing significance as an indication of future methods.

The sense of tonality, of cadence, remained dominant. Beethoven was strong enough to construct a vital *tempo*, an incisive rhythm, a colourful harmony, out of contradictory elements; but he still relied on the triad which he maintained unflinchingly, even in the swiftest modulation, to the end of his life. Beethoven's "diminished sevenths" sound a note of the most poignant tragedy; Wagner's tell merely of technical weakness, revealing his efforts to comply with a changing system of harmony. Beethoven is not by nature chromatic. Mozart's chromatics at times reveal emotional disturbance much more clearly; yet these sudden revelations do no damage to his art because it is the product

of copious inspiration, sure technical mastery and unhampered joy of pure musical creation. That indeed is why Mozart's symphonies and chamber works, taken all together, seem too uniform in plan for the modern hearer and are characteristic and personal only when they uncover hidden tragedies.

In Beethoven the sonata attained perfection and then began to decay. As it became richer in content, wider in emotional appeal, more personal, its structure became less certain. The Hammerclavier sonata, Op. 101, is a striking example of this; the first movement is astonishing in its constructive elaboration, which seems to transcend the limitation of the sonata-form, the slow movement overwhelming in its lyrical expression, while the fugue, monumental and original as it is in form, is a prolonged agony.

The crisis was reflected in Beethoven's sense of tone. He derived his melodic ideas from folk-music; but, from the very first, he connected them with the keyboard, and this instrumental bias remained with him. When deafness came to shut off the world of outward sound, his sense of tone continued its inward development and sought orchestral expression for the free soul within. The human voice was never other than a hindrance to Beethoven's composition, and even had he been able to hear it he would have sought to transcend it. In the Ninth Symphony he exhausted its possibilities: the singers take up the poet's word, accentuate forcibly the common chord of the key and enter as a new body of orchestral instruments to dominate everything else.

Beethoven, in his treatment of melody, prognosticated the instrumental bent of modern music.

The Romantic movement revealed the fact that the sonata-form was crumbling. Rhythm was so weakened by emotional excitement that it lost the greater part of its constructive

power. The new sensibilities, which demanded a blend of the arts, gave colour to melody and harmony, and these, assisted by a new, worldly and sensuous *melos*, excluded rhythm from the great forms of music. The restless, uncertain spirit of the Romantics was expressed in syncopation and slurring of emphasis. A world of wonder was revealed in the capacity of the *appoggiatura* for expressing inertia and yearning. Music became more susceptible to chromatic modulation, called new discords into being, and created a new system of harmony. Subsidiary themes, interlaced, served to enhance the charm of a romantic and colourful type of music.

Rhythm had lost much of its constructive power, but gained adaptability in the hands of a less purposeful but more sensitive and sympathetic generation of musicians. The *rubato* supported vocal sentiment against rhythm, but it was the singer himself who was to exert a new, powerful influence on march, dance and song. The imagination of the period was preoccupied with any new thing, and the musical forms natural to the peasant-mind were an irresistible lure. But the Romantics did not forget their own country, and Robert Schumann, in many ways a typical German Romantic, clung obstinately to a rhythm of his own which was incompatible with the greater musical forms. He attained neither Bach's contrapuntal mysticism nor Beethoven's constructive power, yet he derived something from both. The Romantic movement had influenced and changed him beyond all hope of return to the classical forms. It was otherwise with Mendelssohn, whose formalism was impervious to Romantic sentiment. The fairy spells of a midsummer night did indeed influence him momentarily in the direction of programme-music, but the new impulse to expression was not in him, and, after this single glimpse of modernity, his music remained technically rooted in form, archaic rather than prophetic. At first it had something in common with Berlioz, but it drifted

away from intellectualism and, apart from the *Scherzos*, became a weak reflection of eighteenth-century work.

Chopin's music, on the contrary, contained all the elements of the coming change—the emotional excitability which gave rise to tone-colour, intricate harmony making use of a new world of semitones, a feminine emphasis upon delicacy and intensity in the small forms, rather than on the majestic logic of the great. New rhythms and new colour were supplied by the national marches, songs and dances of Poland, and Chopin's innate talent for this branch of music flourished in the Parisian atmosphere. Something visionary in his art, his truly artistic ambition for perfection in his own *genre*, partly disguises an essentially mundane quality in his work.

In Chopin's sonatas the opening phrases, the principal and secondary themes, all within the sonata-form, yield a marvellous series of emotional pictures. The development of the B-flat minor sonata is almost hysterical in rhythm and harmony, and the closing movement foreshadows Impressionism. The restraints of the sonata-form have been shaken off, the emotions of a genius have undermined breadth of rhythm; but colour-values support the structure instead, and, where logic is wanting, moments of emotional tension carry the work along. It is totally unlike the work of Schumann who, provincial and stereotyped as he was, had absorbed something of Beethoven's spirit, a metaphysical interest of which Chopin was incapable.

Both romantic musicians possessed a *melos* founded on the pianoforte, by which they were technically and imaginatively inspired. The singer had yet to influence the melody which colour-values had kept solely instrumental. Its tone, its breadth, its phrasing, were imitated. This led to the prominence of melodic arabesques and *melismata*, which hang, like gar-

lands, above their harmonic base. Melody thus won new fulness and new charm.

Chopin's *Mazurkas* broke entirely fresh ground. Schumann's songs with piano followed the words of the poet passionately, though at a distance, and helped to bridge the gulf between instrumental and vocal music; but Chopin, unfortunately, with all his romantic gifts did not write "vocally." *Appoggiaturas* and chromaticism, arising in mood and emotion, tended to separate vocal and instrumental music more widely, a tendency which Beethoven had already indicated. This, together with the crumbling of the constructive rhythm of the sonata, favoured the lesser rhythm of dance and song forms, in which Chopin was at ease. On a small scale he created a music of original charm, a first glimpse of a future in which the elements of music should serve for "expression," free of all rules. The present musical crisis is strikingly foreshadowed in Chopin's work.

A new Germany began to emerge with a far wider cultural horizon than the old, and sought to make the most of the lately-won musical freedom to express everything in life and in art; but new problems of form soon arose. Could the sonata-form be preserved, and, if so, how could it be modified so that the new freedom, the new cultural ideas, might enrich and not destroy it? Failure to effect this would inevitably lead to an *impasse* in German music, the character of which absolutely demands a clearly-defined form.

As will be seen from the foregoing, the terms "neo-German" and "neo-Romantic" are by no means interchangeable. Neo-Romanticism arose in Western Europe. The union of optic and acoustic art, the expression through music of a wide range of artistic and literary experience, and the combination of sensuous, nervous and intellectual forces to these

ends called into being a more powerful and more individual type of orchestra, but the mind which conceived this development was French. Neo-Romanticism sprang up where the technical and mechanical resources of music were the subject of unemotional experiment. The technical improvement of keys and valves in wind-instruments hastened chromatic advance, and music as a whole was helped — at any rate superficially — by the somewhat theatrical outlook of the period.

The dramatic spirit gave a further impetus to the cult of colour begun by Berlioz and carried on by Liszt. A singular connection between France and Germany at that time, coupled with the suggestive influence of Liszt's brilliant cosmopolitanism, had domiciled Western stage-craft, with all its material glories, in the native city of Goethe—Weimar. It was thus ready to Richard Wagner's hand; his genius, at once comprehensive and ego-centric, seized upon the proffered material and transformed it for its own ends. Gluck had already exploited the German idea of the drama in a French atmosphere, and the more sensuous Weber had given it a significant twist in the hybrid form of the dramatic *scena*; but Wagner, a man of the new temperamental type, in touch with the sensitive culture of Western Europe, created and perfected a new German music-drama.

The rapid development of music-drama had a pronounced effect on symphonic music. There was no tendency to disparage Beethoven; on the contrary, he was increasingly honoured. The neo-Romantics recognised his work as the perfection of symphonic form, and his multiform *motiv* and its constructional uses formed a fruitful subject of study for the modern musician, for whom it mirrored the conflict between formative idea and established conventional form. The crisis of his "development" sections had a special appeal for him. Furthermore, the neo-Romantic could see how much

Beethoven was obliged to leave unexpressed, as he wrestled with the half-developed orchestra of his day; there was cause enough to read or imagine a "programme" into the great composer's work.

Berlioz made the *leitmotiv* the formative principle in his symphonies, while leaving Beethoven's form practically unchanged. He would not allow his *idée fixe* to do it violence; in short, his genius not being bound up with the instinct for form, he shelved the problem.

Liszt went further and, at any rate, attempted a solution. The difficulty was intensified for him through his essentially gipsy musical temperament. His intellect was more restless and active, his colour-sense more fertile, than were those of Berlioz. His executive virtuosity, the theatricality acquired as a public performer whose attention is necessarily divided between his audience and his art, impelled him to perpetual experiment and spoiled the unity of his work. He introduced the "augmented triad," a perplexing and ambiguous chord, into music, and the parallelism of his tone and colour sense, achieved in interchange between pianoforte and orchestra, enhanced the fresh colouristic effect of his work. He had, however, no very delicate sense of tone as a composer, and he influenced music in the direction of colourful homophony, and therefore away from the sonata.

Wagner increased the difficulty by pronouncing the sonata-form obsolete, and the influence of his opinion at that time was immense. He was strong enough to make his own form, and held that his own work should be sufficient proof to all contemporary and future composers that each new dramatic or imaginative idea could be and ought to be clothed in a new and suitable form.

The *leitmotiv* demanded a more intellectual attitude to

music from both composer and audience. It had proved its constructive value in the symphonic poem and had now to be tested in opera.

The form which Wagner evolved for himself is little more than a very artistic delusion of form which the student of musical work dismisses as amateurish. The various phases of the *leitmotiv* render any attempt to evolve strict form abortive, as do the exigencies of scenes, dramatic, epic, psychologic and musical episodes. Once free of such compelling motives as dominated the *Ring*, music-drama began to develop a capacity for sectionalisation on a small scale; but it was permeated by the Romantic spirit, and such values as it contributed to music were in the nature of enhanced charm, not of great constructive ideas. Both the tendency to make *melos* dependent on the words, and the new "spoken song" (which destroyed melody in the older sense and shifted the centre of balance towards the orchestra which it needed for its support) made for fragmentary rather than continuous form. Though the capacity for great rhythmic construction was lost, very excellent work was achieved within the smaller formal subdivisions. The significant *motiv* was developed artistically, conscientiously and with restraint; with much variety of motion, pitch and colour. A vertical type of polyphony was ingeniously applied to express mood and dramatic situation. The chamber-music qualities of the strings and wood-wind were cleverly adapted to operatic ends. Suspensions and *appoggiaturas*, which express simultaneously restraint and desire, are the main devices by which this music maintains its perpetual state of excitement. Wagner's harmony was no novelty—it derived from Liszt and from ideas in the air at that time—but brilliant development and systematising made mediocre conceptions go a very long way.

The scenic conception supplied the place of a dominant rhythm and carried the composer almost automatically over

the numerous imperfections, knots and repetitions in the elaborately-woven design of his music. The technique of the *Meistersinger*, a work in its kind exemplary and unique, forms the basis of such a purely instrumental work as the *Siegfried Idyll*, an attempt to express the lyrical quality of the last act of *Siegfried* in a small orchestral or chamber-music setting. In this work symphonic design is sacrificed to emotional background; it is reminiscent of the theatre, and is, indeed, a hybrid between symphony and opera. Its separate parts have a very definite form, but what makes the constant interchange of the two motives so attractive is the variation of tone obtained from a small orchestra by the transparent polyphony.

Sequence, the repetition of a phrase on a higher degree, is one of Wagner's most important methods of expression. In classic-romantic music it was employed unwillingly as a stop-gap in cases of technical difficulty, but Wagner used it constructively with stimulating effect. Beethoven, indeed, had rendered it expressive; but through Wagner it attained psycho-physiological value and reached its apotheosis in *Tristan*, the most powerful and sincere of all his works.

Tristan expresses love dominating personality, thus attaining mystical significance. The treatment of this subject is highly artistic and consciously architectonic, making *Tristan* the perfect example of romantic charm. The music breathes inward intensity of feeling rising to ecstasy, and interprets the rhythm of the soul, the pulsations of the heart. Every musical means, rhythmic, dynamic, harmonic, orchestral, developed and perfected in the history of the art, is employed to give expression to a story of overwhelming passion. The composer's very highly evolved sense of tone gets the utmost appeal from strings and wood-wind. *Tristan*, as the apotheosis

of neo-Romanticism, used, recombined and set its stamp upon all the elements of music. Chromaticism becomes the symbol of overmastering passion, while suspended resolution and deceptive cadence convey the impression of unrelieved tension. The connecting links and bridges, outward signs of classic-romantic music, have vanished, and we have instead the "endless melody," the most direct expressive medium, economically used and enhanced by every means within the composer's reach.

Romanticism had rendered rhythm more expressive and more adaptable. Still influenced by Beethoven, it possessed constructive force within the treatment of the *motiv*, but in the hands of a more excitable generation of musicians it began to feel the restraint of the beat irksome, and to make a bid for freedom by means of more frequent changes of time.

Sequence was influenced by all these changes and gained both in constructive and expressive power. Mystic eroticism made it the spokesman of certain psycho-physiological presuppositions. In the Prelude and Death Scene of *Tristan*, it expresses the co-ordination of all the faculties of body and soul in the yearning for perfection. A very high degree of attainment had been reached which was, in reality, the logical outcome of Beethoven's untrammelled self-expression. It is true that in the meantime music had begun to lose stability from the romantic alliance of the arts, from the theatrical and dramatic spirit and from its closer connection with intellectual culture, yet it was still Beethoven, in his last and most liberal phase, who despite new conditions, provided the music of the day with a sound and trustworthy architectural plan. Wagner took his stand on form, even in moments of greatest abandonment.

Beethoven's sonata is thus seen to be the foster-mother of

formal instrumental music even in music-drama. Two-bar rhythm, periods and cadencing are still faintly perceptible amidst romantic emotionalism, rhythm is but loosened, yet the change has been enough to make a vast difference in the general effect of music. The fourfold construction of the sonata was undoubtedly derived from the natural stresses between the different parts within the frame of a strong yet variable form. Though the whole of this structure had been rendered unsafe by the disruptive tendency of the "development sections," these natural stresses between the parts would need some new form expressive of greater freedom and capable of greater development; a form changeable and malleable, and without constriction. Thus arose a new constructional idea, that of a sonata complete in one movement, yet preserving the contrasting parts.

The idea did not spring to life fully grown, though the music-drama first made it seem practicable. Its germ may be found in Schubert's C major Fantasy, though there it was hardly a constructional idea but rather a piece of romantic, imaginative playfulness. On the other hand, Beethoven's *Les Adieux* sonata is actually based on, and worked out in, a single programmatic motive, and his last sonatas and quartets in their singular treatment of *motivs* of memory certainly tend towards the preservation of a single *motiv* throughout.

The single movement was, however, a real innovation. It represented an intellectual effort to make a virtue of necessity in the treatment of form, to unify changes of mood and place, to attain unity in diversity. Liszt, always in the vanguard of ideas, carried it out in an original and individual fashion. The type of symphony thus evolved was a curious and contradictory mixture of tone-sense and colour-sense, of superficiality and significance, of mere virtuosity and intellectual range. Liszt's invention, the Symphonic Poem, is so compounded of racial, cultural and social impressions that the

general effect, though stimulating, is bewildering. Simple and complex rhythms, emphatic tonality and disruptive harmony, tumble over each other. The treatment of the *motiv* derived from Beethoven is nourished upon instrumental tone and the inspiration of the programme; it is both impressive and illuminating; but the creative will, which depends on the conscious workings of fancy, only partly attains its ideal. Liszt was a great man, but he felt the destructive as well as the constructive forces of his time to the full.

In the strict sonata-form, undistracted by orchestral colour, he showed marked constructive power. The B minor sonata is an amazing proof of his intellectual co-ordinating ability. The varied development of the *motiv* is traceable to Beethoven. The courses of the "working-out" show the *motiv* developed in metre, in tone-colour, in dynamic gradation and in harmony, the whole being subject to a constructive idea which is supported by the contrasted moods. The determination with which the underlying idea and all its implications are preserved may perhaps suggest a persistent hallucination; the impression in performance may draw too much attention to the requirements of the virtuoso pianist, but it is none the less a hard-won intellectual triumph.

When Liszt aimed at a more superficial effect, as in a pianoforte concerto, his use of the single movement with a single motive throughout, in combination with his unique grasp of the possibilities of the keyboard, produced a very brilliant result.

A transvaluation of musical values had taken place. Sensibility in rebellion against the old security had changed not only melody, harmony and rhythm, but man's whole attitude to the art of music. Melody which satisfies the desire for a pattern complete in itself, became no more than a lyrical

interlude in an art directed to other ends. Wind instruments were increasingly used, individually and in groups, as their possibilities, particularly those of the wood-wind, for expressing gradations of colour and variation of mood were fully realised. This development was hinted in Beethoven's work, but Berlioz was the first to apply it deliberately; and, from his day to the end of the nineteenth century, it added to the expressionistic resources of music by providing new associations of colour and a new and adaptable conception of form. The whole conception of musical sentiment underwent change; emotional effect was secured, not solely through melodic tone, but by all possible means. The problem of finding a form to express the inward values of outward things to the conscious enrichment of a musical work became pressing. It was only very occasionally solved, but the almost theatrical brilliance of much of the new music emphasised beauties of tone so that deficiencies of form went unpreceived.

"Music as a pattern in sound" and "Music as a means of expression" became the battle-cries of two opposing schools of thought and, as is the way with such cries, the character of each is exaggerated. The two ways frequently cross, for no music is independent of sound nor, consequently, of associations, and none can exist as "expression" alone. Yet the difference was acute. Chromaticism triumphed over the vocal element; diversified rhythm and colour made so determined an attack on the tottering sonata-form that a reaction was provoked.

All the forces of reaction were united in Johannes Brahms, the champion of symphonic and sonata form. He achieved neither more nor less than an apparent restoration of the old rhythmic and constructive security in a time of musical anarchy.

It is reasonable that such a composer should have come from Protestant North Germany, where the patient technique

of many an obscure seventeenth- and eighteenth-century musician had culminated in the genius of Bach. Nevertheless, the more we study his mental and social background, the more astonishing does his achievement appear. Brahms was not uninfluenced by the developments of the preceding half-century; Romanticism touched him; syncopation and certain tricks of cross-accent in his work show that he felt the psychic perplexities of his period; and he was, moreover, oppressed by the responsibilities of his inheritance. But he was not highly susceptible; his musical temperament was not nervous, and colour was merely an incident in the structure of his work.

His artistic horizon was narrow and sombre. He knew nothing of the joys of the tone-colour sense, nor of the inspiring vision of a union of arts in music. He was not sensuous by nature and needed the stimulus of tradition. His simple straightforward will and mystic tendencies made him turn to the forms of Bach and Beethoven, whom he copied with exactitude, though he never caught their spirit. He thus became gradually at home in the classical forms, and sometimes used them mechanically when inspiration failed. His grasp of form was absolute, and so was his determination to include all his emotional experiences, however conflicting, within the same strong framework.

His capacity for emotional experience was, however, limited. Austerity and gloom were natural to him and his gaiety is always forced.

His work combines Bach's linear technique with Beethoven's emphasis of rhythm. Such romantic perplexities as assailed him served only to make his phrase more intricate, to extend his form and to enhance his tone-sense, which was at its best in expressing the graver emotions. He was never directly guided by his sense of tone; his harmony was based on knowledge of the subject influenced by church- and folk-music. He loved Schubert's clear twilight music and the minor key

of Magyar folk-song. Hence arose thematic mannerisms; and the broken "diminished seventh" is to him a very natural means of expression.

His work springs from an inborn and highly cultivated professional sense. His songs evince strong poetic imagination; they are a real contribution to that branch of art and restore the balance between vocal and instrumental music. An original type of melody grew out of his rhythm and harmony.

Brahms belonged spiritually to an earlier generation. His success in attaining formal unity from diversity was a counter-blast to neo-German music; but the way of the modern spirit could not be checked.

CHAPTER II

THE MUSIC MARKET

The new movement in art is not unaffected by the more practical aspects of modern life, some of which are favourable, some unfavourable to music. The modern man's interest in art has not escaped the notice of the business world. Musical producers and agents, bound up as they are with commercial interests, are masters of the situation; the music-loving public unconsciously plays into their hands, while the best artistic opinion finds it hard to obtain a hearing. The business of musical production centres in Anglo-Saxon countries, particularly in London and New York, where it is very highly organised and where the Italian *impresario* has been exploited to the utmost.

England, burdened with the responsibilities of her own great past, has long been preoccupied with practical matters, and has exercised her world-wide political influence to the detriment of her artistic life, more especially in regard to music, the least practical and most metaphysical of the arts. The English themselves realise their need and are anxious to meet it. Some of England's accumulated wealth was early employed to attract the best foreign exponents of music to her shores in the hope that musical appreciation would in time give rise to an English school of composition. Throughout the eighteenth century musical *virtuosos* visited London in great numbers, and when the Augustan age of South German music dawned, distinguished composers were invited to live and work in London and to associate their name and fame with that of England. Thus Handel became English property,

and when Salomon induced the Austrian Joseph Haydn to cross the Channel for the sum of four hundred pounds sterling, musical production in the modern sense began to be a serious factor. Salomon, a business man with a knowledge of the fiddle, wanted to ensure the success of his subscription concerts, but Haydn, who had been living under patriarchal conditions as a Court musician little better off than a servant, was quite unaware that he was heralding the dawn of the new commercial era. He settled down in London, not only to conduct but to compose symphonies, and symphonies of no mean order. Thus began the first lucrative association of the business man with the composer, in the glaring publicity of London life.

The presence of a creative musician in England promoted the best kind of musical appreciation, gave an impetus to the study of music and inspired a certain amount of imitative work, but social standards were both too conventional and too practical to leave room for creative originality. London society wanted "stars" to adorn the London season, and "lions" to idolise. The cosmopolitan Mendelssohn and his unexacting neo-classical music were naturally well received, but there was an immediate instinctive hostility to Wagner, who never disguised his hatred for the musical producer and all his works, and the greatest prophet of modern music was rejected by a society which clung to outworn forms with complacent satisfaction. Not until the musical agents had succeeded in attaching notoriety to Wagner's name by assiduous advertisement did he obtain a hearing, by which time his best creative work was over and he had the traditionist Hans Richter for his advocate.

English conditions in the somewhat blatant atmosphere of the nineteenth century were very favourable to the *virtuoso*. The "publicity" cult in the modern sense began with the *prima-donnas* and tenors of old-fashioned opera, when the

whole programme was made subordinate to these favourites. The system of travelling operatic companies was found to be the best means of satisfying without jading the public appetite for operatic stars, and naturally persisted long in England where "pretty pretty" artistic devices attain a green old age, and the new idea has no chance of acceptance unless securely linked with the old.

To Malibran and her successors was later added a succession of instrumental *virtuosos*. Creative artists like Paganini and Liszt were accepted and lionised for their unparalleled brilliance as performers, though the essence of their genius was not understood, but when Chopin came to England in the maturity of his artistic powers, and near his end, he did not achieve a like success. The poetry of this modern romantic fell on deaf ears; the moment decorative art became really significant and creative, the English audience would have none of it.

All England's wealth and business enterprise failed to foster an original art, because the necessary preliminary conditions were wanting. A people which had produced great subjective poetry and great—if for the most part objective—painting, was yet far from the spirit of music. Self-restraint and circumspection were so highly cultivated that there was no room for the worship of Dionysus, but among those who were not content with mere enjoyment of the music so amply provided, the study of musical science was taken up very ardently. Modern music, when once it was accepted, afforded scope for technical research, and much musical criticism was published in England, a poor substitute for creative inspiration yet serving, perhaps, to prepare the soil for the future.

In musical matters, America possessed the faults of England in exaggerated form. The country was peopled for the most part by men determined to get rich quickly, and their plenti-

ful lack of culture gave scope for the worst kind of artistic exploitation. From about the middle of the nineteenth century, musical exponents who had made a name in Europe began to visit the land of dollars, heralded and accompanied by an orgy of advertisement. Even the true artist, the man of ideals, cannot always withstand the lure of gold, so that a roaring trade was and is done in art and artists. A premium is put on sensationalism, the impulses of creative art are stifled under the resultant ignorant idolisation of name and fame and the systematic cultivation of bad taste, yet they undoubtedly exist and will appear when an artistic social *milieu* has been formed. The study of art, and a measure of technical insight, already exist in America, together with the acute sensibilities which have made modern music possible. The musical agent—descendant of the *impresario* who, as the business interests involved have become larger and more complicated, has now become his prey—is essentially hostile to creative art. All he asks is a long "run" for his production and artists who will lend themselves to sensational effects, particularly operatic singers, whom he can insert in the concert programme as a "draw." If he senses opposition to any item on the programme, he immediately cuts it out, except in rare cases where the opposition is so fierce as to give the chance of a *succès de scandale*. He has indeed a precedent for this in Berlioz's practice of deliberately working up public interest by composing for orchestras of unprecedented size.

The general demoralisation caused by the war strengthened the position of the musical producer and established the preponderance of reproductive over creative artistic activity. In music, creative and interpretive work are interdependent, and it is through their hold upon the exponents of music that

business interests affect composition. The increasing influence of the press, based as it is on financial interests, plays into the hands of the musical agent. The journalist first "discovers" and then to some extent regulates modern art, and although his influence is not necessarily in favour of sensationalism, it tends in that direction.

Two great modern composers—Berlioz in France and Richard Wagner in Germany—ranged themselves the one for, and the other against, the press. They both knew the value of stage-managership to the artist in the nineteenth century. They both knew the far-reaching influence of the printed word in the modern world, and they were both born self-advertisers. Here, however, the resemblance ended. Berlioz, whose love of sensation amounted to hysteria, wrote musical articles sparkling with Gallic wit. It is true that as a creative artist he disliked the critic's task which circumstances imposed upon him, but he made the most of the possibilities it offered, and was not above using deliberate untruth for his own advantage. The truth of his inspiration as a composer, however, mocked at the utilitarian devices and intrigues of his lesser self; his work was always in advance of the comprehension of his fellow-countrymen, and he himself solitary among them. Wagner, on the contrary, advertised himself, not through but in spite of the press. He could not adjust himself to the journalistic *tempo*, and his writings took the characteristic form of long-winded treatises. His keenness and personal ambition were very great and he, like Berlioz, was not fastidious as to the means he employed; his propaganda was very persuasive. Berlioz and Wagner may be said to have been their own agents, but neither liked the task. It was forced upon them by the real necessity of getting performance, without which a musical composition remains unfulfilled. They had to speak through the many mouths of the orchestra and sought to inspire all its members, from the

conductor downwards, with the spirit and meaning of their work.

Berlioz travelled about in Germany, advertising his work by conducting it, while Wagner had to awaken interest and win support in likely quarters by distributing his scores in samples. With the same object he emphasised his connection with Beethoven by conducting his symphonies, his creative genius transforming them into Wagnerian *apologia* under the magic of his conductor's baton.

He could not entirely dispense with the musical agent, however, and it was the *impresario* Angelo Neumann who almost forced the colossal *Ring* upon the notice of the contemporary world.

This occurred at a time when musical production in Berlin was inspired by the spirit of speculative enterprise which swept through the new capital. It was closely bound up with the ancient musical culture of Prussia, a culture very much opposed to modern sensationalism. In spite of this, Berlin supplanted Leipzig and Vienna as the musical capital of German-speaking countries, while its musical agents and producers set the *mode* for the whole world. America followed Berlin in the choice of musical "geniuses," and watched the rise and fall of their value on the Berlin market.

The question which concerns us, however, is whether artistic values were able to thrive in—to what extent they were helped or hindered by—the atmosphere of the modern world.

Circumstances in Germany were at this time very different from those in Anglo-Saxon countries. Society was in a state of transition, but rested on a firm substratum of artistic sincerity. What was the result there of the alliance between musical composition and musical production? What changes were wrought in the composer by the new publicity, and how did the press affect artistic values?

The orchestra, perfected by Wagner, is by far the most important, in a beneficial sense, of the material forces which go to the making of music. It affords a very perfect means of expression for the modern composer. Wagner established a tradition of "personality" in the conductor—that is to say, the conductor's personality was to inform the whole body of orchestral sound, to give it soul, and thus to reach and compel the imagination of his audience. As an outcome of this, musical agents and the public began to demand and expect conductors of a melodramatic type, men who displayed their "personality" at the expense of the composer's meaning. About this time there arose an entirely new type—the conductor-composer. Richard Wagner, gifted as he was, had only taken up the baton when forced to make his work known in this way, and had abandoned it as soon as he felt himself firmly established in Bayreuth. A later generation of orchestral composers saw the full advantages of the business. Realising the conductor's strong power of suggestion (and not oblivious of monetary considerations) they set about the advocacy of their own works. They counted on the personal interest, the enthusiasm awakened in the public by a skilled performer, the acoustic deception which so frequently confuses the excellence of a work with the excellence of its performance—more especially where performer and composer are one—but business interests compelled them further to a commonplace interpretation of others' works (to which their own authority and popularity lent a spurious interest), although a composer interpreting every shade of his own work to an admiring public still provided the greater sensation. The mid-European *kapellmeister* came very much to the fore at this time. He inherited the Wagnerian temperament and had the trick of making it "tell" on the concert platform. Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler and Felix Weingartner are different types of this species.

The modern conductor has played an important part in the development of music, yet the accompanying commercialisation of art has inevitably injured the composer's creative freedom. The modern musician who tastes the delights of public and private adulation to the full, undoubtedly does so at the expense of his own work. His ear is filled with all the subtlest gradations of organised musical tone, his mind is sensitive to a thousand possible shades of expression, with the result that his imagination is hampered and confined. The continual interpretation of the works of others to which his profession compels him is a constant incitement to composition, yet it clouds the sources of inspiration with a mass of irrelevant matter. The underlying idea, the very mood and colour of another musician's works, assimilated through frequent and sympathetic interpretation, may deceive the composer into thinking them entirely his own. Much of the work of even the most advanced modern composers, though very individual in detail, is yet, as regards thematic inspiration, what is bluntly called "*kapellmeister* music." Even in details the line between what is original and what is derivative depends largely on the egotism of the artist.

Richard Strauss, indeed, found himself in the practice of his profession. As a young *kapellmeister* he felt his own lack of creative ideas, and deliberately sought inspiration in orchestral tone. Even in later life he returned from time to time to the conductor's platform to renew the tonal impressions which were so necessary to him, although he felt that in the course of this work foreign elements were unwittingly introduced into his composition. He was obliged to borrow his ideas, but his natural egotism made him attempt to stop the inrush of alien influences by confining himself to interpreting only such work as was in his particular "line"; this limited, if it did not altogether exclude, the possibilities of self-deception, but the compulsion of the *kapellmeister's*

calling was upon him and is often imposed through his work upon his audience.

Gustav Mahler was a very different type. He sought rather to ennoble his professional work, to transcend it, by giving himself up to it whole-heartedly. He was intensely sympathetic and, strong as was his own personality, he was ambitious for the success of other composers. Although his metaphysical bent urged him to creative work, his love of musical beauty made him imitative. He sank his whole personality unreservedly in another's work, gave individual expression to every phrase, offered himself up to the great musicians of the past, spent himself in interpretation. His work went beyond mere effective display to exposition of the most enthralling and original kind. His lack of egotism was a hindrance to his composition, the ideas, colouring and moods of others being received without resistance and incorporated quite unconsciously in his own work. The imitative side of his nature usurped the place of the creative, and Mahler was more completely sacrificed to the *kapellmeister's* calling than was Strauss. This could not, of course, have occurred but for certain limitations in both composers which drew them into the business. Their forerunner, Wagner, consented to remain a conductor only so long as his work lacked distinctive originality. The course of events (and certain forces within himself) did eventually induce Mahler to abandon the profession, but finally he sold himself to America, where he was attacked by the malady which killed him.

The modern composer, whether "conductor-composer" or composer pure and simple, cannot exist without the help of the great handmaid of the business interest—the daily press. The journalist, in his hunt for news, forces himself upon the composer whether he will or no, and the short press notice is but the thin end of the wedge. It is to the interest of business

to have an account of every phase of a new work of art, from its conception to its birth, set down in black and white, no vestige of mystery remaining. By this means a composition attains market-value long before its production. The modern mind, whilst laying special stress on originality, has few opportunities for quiet and recollection, though these alone can give rise to really great and original work, more particularly in an age overburdened, as is ours, with the heritage of the past.

Hans Pfitzner, a genuine disciple of Wagner, has tried to find peace, even with some loss of creative robustness, in a retired corner out of the limelight of commercial journalism, but most of the moderns are hardly sensible of their need. They are intolerant of symmetry and form, but incorporate the rush and confusion of modern life in their work with real zest. Strauss is still an architect in the classic forms, whereas a vast number of present-day musicians compose in aphorisms. Max Reger reflected the strenuous business life in the *tempo* of his creative work, and the speed of many a composer's output is increased to satisfy the insatiable demands of producers and artists. The present-day descendant of the *virtuoso* does much to determine the popularity of a new work and, being involved in the whole business of production, he is not permitted to take long views or exercise a sound artistic judgment. Business methods, moreover, are being adopted by composers themselves. In Germany they have formed themselves into the *Genossenschaft deutscher Tonsetzer*, under Richard Strauss's leadership, to protect their interests against publishers and producers on the one hand and the concert-going public on the other. They have quite abandoned the theory that starvation in a garret is favourable to artistic work, excellent as its effects are said to have been on the genius of past ages.

Modern works thus differ from those of the past just at

the point where personal struggles with circumstances and environment have a modifying effect on both form and content. Many modern compositions are strongly suggestive of mood in proportion to obvious feebleness of form, for acute sensibility checked in its imaginative flights is revealing, and the friction of hostile contacts sometimes strikes out sparks of genius, even where there are no great depths of thought or feeling to be looked for.

Works of this type, however, demand a new public and a new school of criticism. It is impossible to ignore the existence of a host of journalistic sensation-mongers, parasites who flourish in our over-commercialised society, hindering the true progress, though not the rapid exploitation, of the musical profession, but it may be possible to supersede them. The best advocates of modern art are to be found in the ranks of educated artists and *littérateurs*. Since Wagner was rejected by the musical profession and "discovered" by educated people outside the guild, they have felt a measure of responsibility for modern music, and have given it encouragement and support. Their interest has been further quickened by its approach to the other arts, and the poets in particular take an increasing interest in music and act as its literary guardians. In Germany, Hugo von Hoffmannsthal, Rainer Maria Rilke, Stephan George, and others are closely associated with music. Their influence extends beyond opera and song to instrumental music. Painters are not interested in tone-colour only, for they can trace many of their own problems of composition in musical work, and the aesthetes are finding much matter for investigation in the art of combined sounds. All these circumstances, according with certain developments in music itself, make for an increasing divergence between "advanced" music and that which is "understanded of the people."

In German countries criticism is for the most part in

bondage to technique, to a narrow professional or guild spirit, which the modern newspaper actively encourages. The critic is frequently a time-server, entirely without a critical conscience.

A new work, besides labouring under the disadvantages of the composer's natural lack of technical experience, has to meet the determined obscurantism of the critic who considers himself a technician. The genuinely competent critic (and there is a certain amount of genuine critical ability in German-speaking countries) has his own dangers to meet from the time-serving spirit. The artistic critic who prides himself on his close connection with the creative artist is very frequently devoted to a *clique*. He believes in himself as a person of very intense sensibilities and in his own first impressions as sacred, and consequently does not trouble to form a balanced judgment when simple affirmation is sufficient. This attitude is common to all the arts. A favoured few are acclaimed, their work accepted, without the formality of argument. The value of the critic's personality is, however, not to be despised. The average man can only be reached by wide circulation and reiteration of the printed word, while its influence, once established, can only be annulled by actual experience. The best kind of influence is exercised in this way by the writer in whom strength of mind underlies sensibility and receptivity, giving capacity for critical dissection, selection or rejection. In an age like the present, filled with perplexing artistic problems, the word of the critic is mighty. The modern artist's intellectualism and analytical trend make even him dependent in some degree on the critic. While hustling business interests encourage much hasty and imperfect work, while meretricious dilettantism and pretentious mediocrity flourish on all hands, the critic's task is to detect and encourage true genius and to expose sham brilliance; the genuine artist can only be grateful for the discernment which

recognises the merit of his work as a whole yet points out the faults which hinder perfection.

If criticism is an important factor in the modern experimental musician's efforts to achieve a new form, it has a yet greater influence for good on less advanced work. It guarantees a certain definite standing, amidst the turmoil of the modernist schools, to sound technique, the older "guild" spirit in music. This type of music receives a measure of welcome from the musical business world also; it affords the possibility of long "runs," since the public does not easily tire of work which it knows by heart already. Brahms's music is a case in point. He appeals rather to German and English-speaking peoples than to Europe in general. His amazing success was due in the main to the unanimous support of the critics and the musical producers, backed up by a basis of traditional musical culture widespread in Germany. Brahms was neither anarchic nor original in the region of form. His form was the obvious, clearly-defined form of tradition, offering no intellectual obstacles to a public brought up on Bach and Beethoven, and nourished on musical science. A certain lack of "divine frenzy," of anything like intense emotion in Brahms's music was, indeed, felt, particularly in South Germany and among the passionate Viennese. Critics and exponents accordingly emphasised the essentially German character of Brahms's reserve and austerity. The brilliantly journalistic Hanslick, the scourge of Wagner and Bruckner, was not so consistently "professional" as he set out to be, but he based his aesthetic system securely on Brahms. His persistence and fluent eloquence at last converted the Viennese. It was a curious fate which made this intensely musical and sensuous people adopt and champion a musician of the severest type. They did it reluctantly, yet they did it thoroughly. In the meantime, criticism and performance of his work won North Germany and Berlin for Brahms. His spiritual relationship with the

North Germans was instantly recognisable, and his way there had been doubly prepared. The pre-eminence of symphonic music had been established in the north by the critical and enthusiastic educationist, Hans von Bülow, and the romantic and sensitive Nikisch; while the same had been done for chamber-music by Joachim and Artur Schnabel. Brahms was thus a profitable speculation for producers and artists. The Brahms cult degenerated into an over-emphasis upon the individual qualities in his work till they appeared as mere mannerisms, but it undoubtedly helped to preserve the sense of form in music, though not to create new form. It took a particularly strong hold upon a considerable body of music lovers who were indifferent to modernist experiment, and it gave a number of less adventurous composers courage to continue on moderate lines. Furthermore, it did something to bridge the rapidly widening gulf between cultured and folk music, an alienation particularly deplorable in a country where love of music is widespread and the capacity for assimilating musical culture innate in many of the people. If one goes from a big city to a small provincial town in Germany one still finds no trace of the modernist storm, none of the excitability encouraged by the modern music industry; the old firm musical outlines, bound up with long tradition, are as firmly established there as ever. The Great War, unfortunately, has hardened piety of this type into stubbornness, and has made Brahms and Beethoven the symbols of a narrow patriotism.

We must now devote a short space to the consideration of opera as a branch of Germany's manifold musical life. The Germans as a people are essentially ethical and consequently non-theatrical, with the result that opera in that country has always been left in the hands of profit-seeking producers

who have aimed at making it merely entertaining without regard to higher artistic values. Such producers have done their best to cultivate love of the theatre in the people, and the daily performance, now to be found in big and little theatres up and down the country, is the reward of their labours. On the other hand, the struggles of the German operatic composer are well known, and it was long before Berlin would accept even Wagner. Liszt, in his day, declared war against the producers on behalf of freedom for the artist, and attempted to force a way for operatic progress, but the power of the producers remains immense, and only very recently a few vigorous and original theatrical managers and dramatists have begun to make their wholesome influence felt in Germany. In general, gorgeous and meaningless stage settings still smother intelligent stage-craft, and the artist's work has to accommodate itself to them as best it can. In the provinces most performances fall flat unless bolstered by the presence of "stars." The producer regards the matter strictly from the money point of view; he realises the costliness of operatic production, and he knows that the most hackneyed operetta will attract an audience if it offers a few pretty tunes and sensational scenes. The public very seldom hears any good work. The chief hope for the future lies in education, and there are already signs of a coming folk-opera. The German people are undoubtedly susceptible to culture in music, and their achievements in opera are likely to be limited only by something essentially unoperatic in their nature.

It is impossible to blink the fact that in spite of Wagner's work, German audiences—and those not only the most superficial—are attracted by light Italian opera and the "star" system, that it is this fact which is the main obstacle to genuine German opera, and one is tempted to conclude that the charm of the Latin type of opera has become an absolute necessity to the public. The most encouraging aspect of the situation,

however, is the decline of the music industry in the home of opera, in Italy itself, where it is now carried on only in wealthy and enterprising Milan and to a lesser extent in Turin. The Italians, so highly cultivated in the small things of life, are children in business. In that fortunate country even American business enterprise finds itself "up against" a cheerful indifference which makes profitable bargaining very difficult. On the artistic side the strength of tradition is great; musical science is developing, and there is a growing desire to revive the spirit of Renascence art which gives promise for the future.

The essence of modernity is to be found, as always, in Paris. Between 1870 and 1914 an entirely new and amazing musical culture sprang up there and flourished unconnected with business interests of any kind. Fierce battles were waged in Paris on the subject of opera, the cult of personalities issued in much wordy warfare, and the soil appeared at first to be favourable to operatic music, *opéra lyrique*, only. In Germany, as we have seen, the things of the soul sought expressive form in music, but in France love of the visible arts and an innate sense of form led to an interest in music which expressed itself naturally in opera. The somewhat withered glories of the past, "Grand Opera" and the *Académie nationale de Musique*, were long cherished and the spirit of sensuous delight persisted in the *Opéra Comique*, which was perfected by Carré and which was on the whole progressive, though it was not quite free of the fetters of tradition.

There is no folk-music and no real passion for music in the French people. Habeneck's performances of Beethoven's music at the *Conservatoire* are said to have marked an era in French musical history, but they only served to bring about the reign of a new tradition, as dead and conventional as that which had preceded it. Originality, when it came, arose in the seclusion of the *salons*. The intimate social intercourse

of a few fine minds has always been the source of true art in Paris, though it has also given rise to objectionable *cliques*. Other influences came from without. In their desire for a musical revival the French willingly absorbed the ideas of their German conquerors. Wagner's amazing artistic exploitation of all the senses aroused in theatre-loving France a frenzy of enthusiasm, encouraged in word and deed by Lamoureux, until even the middle classes were carried away by it.

Music thus received a new impetus from two sources. The concert was still barely dissociated from the theatre, but as the various branches of music were cultivated, the idea of concert music, as distinct from that of stage music, at last arose. Musical science was systematically studied and musical criticism was gradually purged of the idle gossip and absurd inaccuracy which had characterised it hitherto. The merits of composers and their works became a subject of interest with the younger men. The old musical culture lived on in the *Société des Instruments anciens*, while the new *Schola cantorum*, under Vincent d'Indy's leadership, became a one-sided but enthusiastic champion of the past.

While Berlioz, Wagner and other foreign composers, together with German conductors such as Strauss, Weingartner and Nikisch, were taking possession of Paris, and Colonne, Lamoureux and Chevillard were making French orchestral interpretations known outside France, a curious musical revival occurred which appeared to be rooted in archaism. Many of the best minds in the ranks of Parisian musicologists, musicians, *littérateurs*, and aesthetes shook off the yoke of Wagnerianism and asserted the independence of French music.

Once again in France music followed in the wake of the visual arts; imagination was subject to the criterion of intellect; and a new school of music grew up, resting upon the

living influence of César Franck, and upon the ancient musical creed of Rameau. Debussy was the prophet of the new movement.

This rapid development of music, in both its creative and interpretive aspects, was neither helped nor hindered by business interests. Beginning as a rapid adoption and adaptation of German ideas, it became within a short space a national art, but it did not touch the mass of the French people, to whom music was, and is, simply an *agrément de l'esprit*. The new movement arose in the *salons*; it was in a sense "precious," and its influence, spreading from Montmartre to Germany, increased the divergence between cultured and folk music which is apparently against the German spirit. It contained, however, progressive ideas derived from the painter's art, and promoted clear thinking on musical problems.

The national idea underlying French music, fanatically championed by Saint-Saëns and inherent in the work of many of the younger men, had a narrowing, political trend. The very name *Société nationale de Musique* showed a tendency to introduce racial emotions and antagonisms into music, while the emphasis upon the idea of nationality in the *Fraternité latine*—designed to draw France and Italy closer together—had a limiting effect upon composition. Political alliances undoubtedly prepared the way for the musical *rapprochement* between France and Russia. Russia was worlds apart from France in its musical predispositions, but its upper classes had long been associated with France in speech and manners. Russian amateurs had already contributed to musical progress (uninfluenced, of course, by the musical producer) and tone-colour arose there spontaneously, but when the Russian *conservatoires* began to seek for teachers they received a grounding of German music under the influence of Anton Rubinstein. German conductors began

to visit Russia, where the rich soil of the national character promised to bear fruit under foreign cultivation, but political troubles arose and England and America joined the existing political alliance to close the ring against Germany.

Our survey has led us away from the question of musical production, and we can now look back and view it as a whole. Publicity and the "market" can only prove helpful to music when interest in that art is inherent in a people; but through the world-wide interdependence of business interests, musical production brings races, composers, and their works together, promoting free intercourse and a cosmopolitan spirit in music. Within recent times the music industry has caused profound changes in the musical life of Germany, a heightened sensibility which is favourable to progress, but also a want of the quietude and serenity which alone can make the best use of the new inspirational sources.

Then came the recent murderous war. Events followed hard upon one another, and history was made under our very eyes. Germany was defeated, collapsed, suffered revolution. Was it a true revolution? In any case it shook the artist's world. Even those who had hitherto remained untouched by the course of events, suddenly realised the close connection between art and world economics, and something long foreseen by the clearest minds became incontrovertible fact. The highly-developed culture of the middle classes was felt to be lifeless and cramping. Men turned to the vision of a new social order seeking to blot out the past and begin the world anew. While the activities of the middle-class music industry continued unabated, the dogmas of the New Art, which had long been developing unrestrainedly, one-sidedly, under the pressure of a spiritual blockade, were proclaimed with increasing weight and confidence. Salvation was to be

found in an alliance between the artist and the proletariat, in the destruction of all art founded on the *bourgeois* code to make room for that of the new era. We need clarity of thought, a firm grasp of the end we seek, to guide us through this age of anarchy.

CHAPTER III

ART AND ARTIFICE

The present spiritual revolution has long been coming upon us, although the bewildering effect of certain astounding political and social events upon the minds of thinking people has brought it suddenly to a head. Authority in its many abstract forms has been overthrown, and a spiritual republic has been proclaimed. Mankind has been challenged to throw off, once for all, its doubts and burdens, and the intellectuals, looking to the example of the great French revolution, have once more raised the cry of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," this time on behalf of the "fourth estate," of the Worker as opposed to the Capitalist.

The Great War had a particularly deracinating effect upon the artist, who is by nature non-political. He, who had planned to spend his life among the high places of human thought and achievement, suddenly found himself a mere number in a military organisation, and when the revolt against militarism came, he was only too ready to throw in his lot with the proletariat, with Socialists, Independents or Communists. It is by no means difficult to use art as propaganda for a cause, for the number of artists of very strong individuality is small, and they are, as a class, as subject as other men to the herd instinct, whether it tends for the moment to abstract idealism or its opposite. In the last resort, undoubtedly, most men put their individual well-being before their allegiance to a party; the proletariat abuse the *bourgeoisie*, but their grand ambition is to belong to it, while many an artist who pretends to scoff at the middle classes belongs to them body and soul.

The genuine, the inspired artist, is indeed a born anarchist of a harmless type. His impulse to go his own way irrespective of convention is the opposite of middle-class; yet he is forced to realise that his work, once accomplished, will serve principally for the delight of the middle classes. His life is not that of the "classes"; yet he cannot ignore them; while from the "masses" he draws the common human bases of his art; so that the relationship existing between the "classes" and the "masses" can never be indifferent to him. He *must* evoke a response from them, even when he thunders against them, for if he does not get it he perishes. Although the enthusiasm of a crowd of followers, a *clique*, may shoulder him into a position of temporary prominence, they cannot support him for ever against the weight of public indifference or repudiation.

For these reasons, political and social revolutions touch the artist nearly, although he lacks the social sense—that is to say, he will not make the same response as other men to the outward convulsions of the society in which he lives and works; he will simply ask himself how these convulsions are likely to affect public understanding of, and sympathy with, his work, and he will be roused to a re-estimation of his chances of artistic immortality.

Long before the present troubles began, the artist became conscious of a cleft between cultural and folk art. To-day high art has become "precious" and narrow, while the people revel in what in Germany is called *Kitsch*, catchy, meretricious stuff. "Art" of this type is at present more wide-spread and more popular than ever before. The word *Kitsch* was coined by the aesthetes and thrown contemptuously to the people; for the existence of the thing both sides are probably to blame.

There is no doubt that the people as a whole are exceedingly inartistic. Their right to like obvious and broad effects in art is not disputed, but it is a right which the average man with

his love of comfort and hatred of mental exertion abuses most shamefully. Modern life, with its machine-made industrialism, has worked a profound change in the people who once produced the folk-songs and dances which were the sources of music; they have ceased to be artistically creative and are content with the cheap rhythm and degraded sentimentality of musical comedy. The cinema is in itself a magnificent discovery, but at present it usually offers mere sensational matter to satisfy the lust of the eye, and demands no kind of mental activity.

The creative artist thus naturally turns away from the people; it is no part of his calling to provide them with superficial amusement, which is all they demand, and sooner or later comes the parting of the ways, if he is to maintain his integrity. Often, however, he continues to cherish the hope that through the best in the folk he may find a way to the hearts and minds of the crowd and become a popular artist in the truest and best sense. It is a hope loudly proclaimed at present, but it has little to support it; for the same period which had seen the rise of the art industry in all its ramifications—the great routine concerts, the art-dealers and endless art exhibitions—is also the age of the degradation of art through artifice. Skill in the handling of artistic media has been acquired at the cost of artistic meaning and significance. We are offered a glorified form of handicraft.

This tendency is very noticeable in literature, where formal facility and rhetoric have increased beyond measure. The author no longer seeks a style which will illumine his subject; he seeks instead a brilliant "subjective" style without objective basis, misusing the most universal means of expression to advertise his own personality, and doing incalculable harm thereby. Style of this kind not only diverts attention from essentials and hinders clearness of thought upon the subject of which it treats, but it falsifies the subject itself with its

sham sparkle. Since art seeks literary expression to an unprecedented extent at the present time, the disastrous effects of such "literature" upon it—especially when it handles the art of music which transcends expression—may be imagined.

Artifice is, moreover, very widely employed in the performance of musical works. Constant and greedy exploitation for business purposes tends to destroy the freshness of certain compositions, and artifice is used to cover the difficulty. When a conductor has performed a work of Beethoven so many times that he has lost interest in it, he looks round for a personal interpretation which will alter essentials of *tempo*, dynamic, and structure in the composition and give the public the amusement of contrasting the nuances of his exposition with those of other conductors. Under this treatment the aspect of the work gradually changes till it becomes almost unrecognisable. The same process is employed in operatic production, and on all hands the creative artist is sacrificed to the exponent. This phenomenon was apparent before the war, but it greatly increased during the succeeding period in Germany owing to the spiritual blockade imposed upon that country and the inability of her artists to move about with freedom.

Yet more significant than the foregoing is the development of artifice in the work of art itself.

Programme-music demanded neither more nor less than a perpetual re-adjustment of form to content. This particular type of music arose, indeed, from a sense that the elements of music and their organisation in the sonata were outworn, but that they might be replaced to some extent by matter drawn from the other arts or from experiences of life and nature. At the same time it was believed that music with a clearly-defined programme, a characteristic motive such as forms the basis of a poem, would appeal to a wider range of people, yet whatever value may attach to programme-

music at the present day it certainly never succeeded in reaching the spirit through the senses as did music-drama. Neo-Romantic music suffered the reproach of not being romantic enough; it was unfortunately named.

Aesthetic philosophy recognises no incongruity in the association of music with spatial phenomena, nor in the close connection between musical and visual representation. Melody is defined as movement and the chord as a mass of characteristic density formed by the "stratification" of intervals. The attempt to express events in terms of music, to paint in tone, was thus natural and inevitable. Both architectonic and colouristic musicians derive from John Sebastian Bach; the sense of tone-colour did not begin with the Romantics, but was expressed long before in the orchestration of Haydn's *The Seasons*; while programme-music arose out of the yet older connection of music and words.

Nevertheless, tone-colour was first consciously pursued by a later generation of musicians who had gained in sensibility at the expense of artlessness and spontaneity. The miracle of delicately-graduated colour in music was made possible by a new aesthetic temperament, susceptible, nervous and intellectual.

Colour as such, be it understood, is inherent in instrumental diversity of tone, and we have already sketched its development in intensity and delicacy through improved orchestral technique. It was naturally used for operatic purposes at an early date, as in the work of C. M. von Weber. Its fascination once revealed, its use increased very rapidly. The instrument even becomes an individual personality, as with the *cor anglais* in Berlioz, a source of inspiration up to quite recent times — while the possibilities of combination appear inexhaustible. The constant reinforcement of the orchestra is, indeed, almost terrifying, for no limit can be set to the multiplication of the strings (which have long outgrown the

quartet), to the increase of wind and percussion instruments, to the stirring effects obtainable from kettle-drums, bass and other drums, cymbals and triangles, not to speak of harps, celestas and pianoforte. All this makes for increased delicacy of expression, as well as for increased volume of sound, while at the same time the peculiar tone-values of individual instruments become more marked. High pitch and low are associated as a matter of course with light and darkness; the trumpets and trombones supply all shades of yellow down to the deepest red perceptible to the acute sensibilities of the modern man, while the flutes and oboes suggest every delicate tone of blue and green.

Colour is associated with key, as well as with the *timbre* of an instrument. This is no new discovery, for Schubert, Mattheson and E. T. A. Hoffmann among others dallied with the idea in their day, though only in a half-playful, fantastic way. It is now used deliberately, for conscious knowledge has established a connection, previously apprehended intuitively through the senses and imagination, between key and situation. It is strange that the significance of the key should be the subject of such close study at a moment when it threatens to fall into disuse. The heightening effect of the sharp keys, the subduing influence of the flat keys, lead to their natural and inevitable association with gay moods in the first case and grave in the second. Equally instinctively one feels the force of Wagner's use of the 136 bars of E flat major in the prelude to *Rhinegold*, the significance of the key in the *Fire Enchantment* scene, in the *Valkyrie Ride*, in the beginning of the *Götterdämmerung* and the *Valhalla motiv*. At the same time there can be no doubt that the peculiar tone of the instruments, as for instance that of the tubas in the *Valhalla motiv*, is more important to the emotional effect than the D flat major key in which the *motiv* occurs.

The disintegration of the key-tonality is increasing tone-

colour in modern music. Insistence on chromatic discords has shaken the sense of tonality, and music relies more and more for effect upon the chromatic notes—that is to say, the modification of chords by notes foreign to the scale—and upon the delayed resolution of dissonances. At the same time the brilliant possibilities of the modern orchestra have tended to destroy the feeling for logical modulation; and harmonic development, now bound up with a type of instrumentation which glosses over knotty points, is made to serve colouristic effect only. Orchestral beauty appears to promote rhythmic lawlessness by releasing it from all responsibility for the structure of the work as a whole. Furthermore, it lowers the value of melody. Triviality is excused on the ground that programme-music has a right to represent trivialities, only the manner in which the subject is treated being important.

The above remarks are intended to apply to the tendencies of the age as a whole, rather than to individual composers or their works.

Programme-music, in the course of its development, has called a new system of aesthetics into being. It could not be otherwise; for as intellectual conceptions began to play more part in both the origin and construction of a musical composition, it became increasingly a subject for discussion and debate. Literary dialectic entered the realm of music.

As the instinctive and elemental forces which make for "pure" music declined and the means of expression outgrew the matter to be expressed, music itself tended towards artificiality. Form was sacrificed to beauty of colour, and although, in theory, form should be capable of perpetual renewal from the "plot" on which music is made, it was found that "plots" which required musical illustration were less ready to hand than had been supposed; their formative

impulse did not maintain its strength. "Programme-music" was merely a brilliant interlude in the history of music, important only when it ceased to be merely representational and became an imaginative delineation of mental impressions. In its long course of development it strengthened the instrumental trend of music and, in so far as it avoided the clear outline of the sonata-form and made for orchestral vagueness, it prepared the way for impressionistic effects—for the formlessness of German Impressionism as opposed to the formal perfection of French Impressionism.

Music of this kind is entirely remote from the average music-lover who listens to symphonic work chiefly as a refuge from reality; he wants romanticism as a compensation for the hard facts of life, and he craves for what is mysterious and beyond the scope of reason. It is true that the majority of listeners are affected by mood and colour in music, but these cannot supply the place of the lyrical *adagio*, for the ordinary music-lover thinks of music as "pure" music, quite distinct from the other arts, and as set apart for expressing the feelings which transcend definition. Music conveys these mystic values of love and beauty to him with redoubled force when it expresses and re-expresses them in a strong and sharply-defined form, logically worked out to the least detail. It is said of Richard Wagner that he freed music from the old academic and professional spirit and, in so doing, appealed to a far wider audience than any previous composer; and it is true that he was, in a sense, a brilliant amateur who gave music a place in human culture which it had not held hitherto; yet as a result of this mighty achievement, music was for the future bound up with the explanatory word. Wagner's co-ordinating genius succeeded in blending words and music with great effect, but it is a combination which lends itself to abuse in less able hands. Since that time, a host of "intellectuals," literary men and poets, have under-

taken to expound the composer, to rescue him from the limitations of his profession, to save him, in short, from the fate of being misunderstood. Both Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler were surrounded by a swarm of such advocates, and no modern composer can escape the panegyrics of Hermann Bahr and his type. Debussy enjoyed the advantages of such literary favour to the full, for the Frenchman betakes himself to words more readily than the German. Unfortunately the mediocre composer is scarcely less the subject of such cults than the great; if he cannot attain prominence on his merits he can be talked into it. There is no such thing as a misunderstood genius in these enlightened days, but there is many a manufactured one.

This activity is, however, encouraging proof of the widespread and increasing interest in music which is now acknowledged as pre-eminent among the arts. In the music-drama the other arts were pressed into the service of music in striking and public fashion, and since then an increasing number of poets, philosophers and painters have acknowledged its direct influence. The movement is bound up with a mystic tendency, strong in Northern art to-day, and particularly so in Germany.

The course of musical development has thus emphasised the distinction between "instinctive" music and "artistic" music. Colour and emotional suggestion appeal to many minds, but the so-called absolute sense of pitch and tonality has no connection with the tone-colour sense and may be actively opposed to it. As impressionist charm increased, pure musical values declined in estimation. The ear was perverted by the increasing chromatic alterations of the chord, which—like the rhythmic lawlessness which accompanies them—reflect the modern artistic person's acutely

susceptible and receptive temperament and deficient sense of purpose and rhythm. At the same time the charm of colouristic music provided special opportunities for the *poseur*, while literary artifice increased in poets and exponents of music.

An art based on charm, on sensuous excitement rather than on character and purpose, eventually reacts on the manhood of the artist, while untrammelled self-expression leads to egoism, and egoism expresses no more than the most superficial qualities of the self.

Painting and music drew very close together as the painter felt the attraction of a formless, colourful and impressionistic type of composition. Aesthetic philosophy found parallels in the two arts, such as a similarity between the "build" of the sonata and the well-defined outlines of a certain school of painting. Both were now to be replaced to make room for a new artistic form, but how was this form to be attained?

In France, the Impressionist movement in music, led by Debussy, followed Impressionist painting, and music became "artistic" in a vain attempt to copy the art of the studios. Musicians dabbled in colours without seeking either a spiritual or technical basis from which to work, and they discarded the old music built on the polyphonic phrase before they had made sure of a new. In Impressionist music, Germany was admittedly further from artistic form than the other countries of Europe, which were already beginning to form a musical *Entente*.

Much valuable energy was expended on innumerable musical experiments, while the gulf between cultural and folk music rapidly widened. A narrow and exclusive circle of artists and *littérateurs* were preoccupied with what is called "advanced" art, leaving the wider public untouched, while on the other hand academic philistinism found its public all too readily.

It was an age of "party cries," of "tendencies" and "movements," of much talking and much writing. Was music to take her orders and direction from painting? Each of the great arts shared the same tendencies. It was felt that the restlessness of the age was unsuitable to great art; but it was hard to fix on a definite aim in the welter of staleness, boredom and triviality. The new aesthetic science postulated a comprehensive philosophy behind all art, and deduced a "will to expression" therefrom. Such an outlook was necessarily a strain on artistic simplicity, an intellectual burden, to which was added for the modern artist the oppressive sense of the long history behind his art. It was nevertheless good that philosophy and the "will to expression" should be recognised as the only possible bases of great art. Hatred of triviality is the sign of an artistic conscience opposed to every form of sham; but unfortunately, in the concept of sham art the painter came to include not only smooth emptiness, but Nature herself, the musician, melody and everything which suggests melody. Aesthetic philosophy, hastily assimilated, led to ill-advised and hasty work, while the "will to expression," baffled by the problems of form and content, gave rise to eccentricity.

Art fell into a condition of chronic experiment. Experiment, indeed, is welcome, is justified, when it is made in good faith and based on real imagination and technical skill, and it must not be forgotten that, while "movement" and "progress" are not interchangeable terms, the first is as natural to art as it is to life.

In the early days of the present century the revolt against triviality gave rise to Futurism in Italy and France. The main idea of the movement was to transcend both objectivity and Impressionism, but it became a kind of inverted artificiality, continually running after some new thing. Its doctrines were applied to music—which essentially transcends

objectivity—to justify the abandonment of the accustomed forms, and led to countless experiments.

"Expressionism" arose, a new catch-word which might have been invented by any art-dealer, but which acquired a real and deep meaning in Germany. "Expressionism" was a revolt against the irresponsibility and mere pleasing facility which had become associated with "Impressionism," and it stood for the plain and terse *expression*—uncomplicated by the projection of the ego into the thing to be expressed—of the eternal values of the *noumena* behind phenomena. It demanded a return to primitive simplicity in the mind of the artist; and, in painting, a more "absolute" and abstract form was sought, approximating to music and based on tone-colour.

Behind the idea, the programme of the expressionist artist, the will to achieve good, original and distinctive work was unmistakable; but the mixed conceptions of Expressionism found the media of art somewhat intractable. Primitive simplicity was sought in various ways, some natural and genuine, despite eccentricities; some forced or meaningless, for the new term brought in its wake, as usual, a new host of copyists. In Germany, certain organised groups of artists took on an almost military character, proclaiming a kind of minority dictatorship. The eccentricity which only genius can justify became a fashion and a pose.

"Party cries" current in the German Revolution invaded the region of art, and the new movement—its soundest ideas exaggerated—became a method of influencing the masses, of flattering the proletariat. This type of Expressionism was as ready for a holocaust of artistic traditions as was Communism for the annihilation of the *bourgeoisie*.

Expressionism in its essence, however, arose naturally and inevitably in the course of artistic development, quite apart from either the German Revolution or the would-be World-Revolution of the Russians. In Germany, unfortunately, the

spiritual blockade led to a kind of intellectual in-breeding; but no sooner had the barriers between the nations fallen, than the unity of artistic thought became apparent; only its formal outward expression has local variations.

Triviality, imitation and tradition are alike combated on all hands, and there is to-day a widespread determination to have done with artifice.

We have outlined the movement in painting because the painter's watchwords inevitably affect music, particularly at a time when painters such as Kandinsky pay unprecedented homage to music. Many of these painters are frustrated musicians whose attempts to transcend objectivity have approximated their art to craftsmanship and design. They are obsessed with the idea of projecting music into space, of localising the temporal art. There is an attempt to express the motion of music through the medium of colour cinematography.

But in contemplating the connection between the two arts, it does not do to forget their differences. The barrier between music and painting consists in the difference of their media. Music (with which alone we have to do here) cannot in actual fact keep pace with the rapid succession of experiments in painting, since its problems, both of form and material, have an entirely different basis. In practice, various tendencies in music live side by side, for the sonata and symphony are not dead, either in their one-movement or cyclical forms. The cyclic principle which demands an organic development of the *motiv* persists, though signs of decay in form are not wanting. Programme-music and Impressionism also survive, the former labouring under the burden of instrumental over-elaboration.

Certain types of music, again, are preserved through their hold on the affections of the public, which displays more partisanship in music than in the other arts, while elements

of musical form—slowly developed in the past history of the art—are frequently so closely intermingled in a particular work that it is impossible to say to which type it belongs. Nevertheless both the modern composer and the modern sympathetic student of his work perceive the need of renewal in music, a renewal which can only be found by way of experiment. The movement to exclude all artifice, to aim at expression and expression alone, may lead to the goal which we seek, but the more audacious would do well to remember that a complete revolution is impossible in art, that the link with the past must be preserved.

The painter has not been quite successful in transcending artifice through Expressionism, and the musician has succeeded still less. In literature, artifice survives even the tendency to condensation which reduces the serial story to the dimensions of the essay. Artifice, indeed, when contemplated dispassionately, is seen to be a necessary concomitant of a time of transition and experiment.

The problems of expressionist music are very numerous. The sense of dissonance is weakened and resolutions are no longer desired, while sequence is considered tiresome and discursive. Rhythmic liberty has become absolute freedom of beat, not to be confused with the rhythmic liberty which existed in primitive music before the introduction of the bar. The present disappearance of the bar is due to a conviction that rhythmic possibilities are exhausted. A further step has been taken in the direction of atonality; the support of tonality exists no longer and the result is apparent chaos; but it is a chaos full of potentialities, and there is no need to despair, even if atonality should lead temporarily to complete anarchy.

The human voice is an exceedingly important factor which is in danger of being forgotten. The many adventures of instrumental music, chromatic artifice in its many manifesta-

tions, have all tended to depreciate the value of the voice, while the interminable type of melody called "spoken song" made mistaken use of it. The voice, moreover, depends on the natural vigour and richness of the musical matter which is now felt to be outworn. At the same time its frictionless quality is very cogent in works for choir and orchestra. Opera still depends principally for its effects upon the human voice, and there is still much vitality in the peculiarly German short song. Vocal music, again, is undoubtedly endangered by the unsatisfied and insatiable longings of the over-sensitive modern temperament.

Can the people, as a whole, help in any way to bridge the gulf between instrumental and vocal music? There is no such thing as artistic education among the masses, but there is a spark of true artistic feeling there which might become a conflagration. Education and training alone can produce nothing better than artistic mediocrity, and, as things are at present, there is a danger that a levelling spirit will affect all branches of music as it has affected opera; the ordinary threatens to crowd out the extraordinary in art.

At the same time the spark of true art in the folk could be cherished and fed by the right leaders. While the existence of the orchestra—overblown and over-elaborated as it is—is threatened by the financial crisis, a new kind of communal music is emerging in the form of workmen's choirs, whose joyous and spirited activities are a marked contrast to the "artistic" but very un-festal atmosphere of the ordinary concert. This new choral music is a product of the new age and will prove its worth in the future.

A "mass" movement towards art can neither be forced nor hurried, for people as a whole are still devoted to shams and sentimentality; but teachers of strong personality might do much. Middle-class musical culture has fostered a knowledge of art, but has choked the sources of inspiration with

a superfluity of concerts and musical discussion, and the wide-spread habit of score-reading has done much to destroy delight in music as a living, passionate experience.

A reconciliation between cultured art and folk-art is an urgent necessity.

The period is a critical one in the history of art, and the future possibilities are many; but it is time for us to consider the phenomena presented by actual composers and their work, and so view the situation from another aspect.

PART II

COMPOSERS AND THEIR WORK

CHAPTER IV

THE WAGNERIAN SCHOOL

After a period of mediocrity in the history of German music, Wagner's work stands out as a notable and original achievement, but the school of music founded by him suffered from more than the usual number of weaknesses. The success of the master, and the failure of his disciples, are explained by the exceptionally dominating nature of Wagner's egocentric genius. An unusual combination of talents made him an epitome of the worthy and less worthy tendencies of his period and rendered him—despite the rarified atmosphere in which he sometimes moved—in the best sense of the word, democratic. His work appealed to all sections of the public, to the intellectuals for its thought-provoking qualities, to the romantics for its abundant beauty, to the *homme moyen sensuel* for the deliberate eroticism which permeates the music, and lastly, also to the confraternity of musicians who were subjugated by the perfect workmanship of the *Meistersinger*.

The sensual appeal was undoubtedly the most persuasive. But Richard Wagner had power to invest work, the originally deeply ethical conception of which was distinctly touched with sensuality, with a kind of halo; and this halo Wagnerians have considered it their duty to preserve at all costs. Any hint at the undeniably sensual stimulus of his work was taken as an insult; his poetic spirit was constantly belauded; he alone had done great things, through the inspiration of the primitive German spirit. The historical and cultural sources which inspired Wagner's work were obvious and incontrovertible, but the qualities of charm, brilliance and sensitiveness in

the music-dramas suggested doubts as to the undiluted Teutonism of the blood which ran in the master's veins.

The stage-craft which envelops Wagner's work is so overpowering that the work itself is in danger of being overlooked; and this may in part account for the fact that, as our distance from him increases, criticism of him and revolt against him become more open. This, however, arises mainly from the operation of the natural law by which a sense of satiety must follow an art which stimulates so many powers of the mind, excites so many instincts, and tyrannises indeed over life. Exhaustion follows on extreme nervous tension; but the real worth of the work is proved in that much still retains validity in the changed thought of a new age.

The striking effects and staging of Wagner's work proved very attractive to the average man and extended his popularity far beyond German frontiers. To speak of Wagnerian stage-craft is to speak of Bayreuth, a state within a state, the imperial city of opera, where art tyrannised over man, creating for people of all races a unique atmosphere, full of charm and the magic of association. After the political collapse of Germany, Bayreuth may hold Wagner Festivals, but can never become what it was formerly. What will be the fate of Wagnerian opera, exiled from Bayreuth? It will certainly have to withstand more searching criticism, and establish again and again its right to survive, unsupported by the glamour of a dominating stage-tradition.

Bayreuth represented the ideal of a theatre in which the typical German community-feeling—"team-work"—was intensified to its utmost by the force of dominating personalities; but a satisfactory *ensemble* did not suffice, as it had done perhaps for Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*. The new music-drama demanded the complete surrender of the personality of the interpreters to give it expression, and only an intensified devotion to the whole from each dramatic singer could

produce the unique impression at which it aimed. Pilgrims to Bayreuth found there the perfection of the democratic theatre, a masterpiece of organisation, a new tradition of the German music-drama, as opposed to the "star" system of Italian opera. In Germany, and in all countries which sent singers to study there, the charm of Bayreuth was perpetuated by a succession of enthusiasts who embodied the ideas they received at Bayreuth with all the force of intense loyalty. Such were the Wagnerian conductors, Levi, Richter, Mottl and Toscanini. As time passed, however, Wagner's work necessarily became to some extent subdued to the limitations of the ordinary stage; a mediocre working level of presentation was found, a tradition of conventional pathos and prescribed gesture, which the less gifted performer might learn, but from which the spirit had departed. The performers no longer attempted to interpret the work, but became mechanical, and the second-rate conductor relied on stereotyped orchestral effects. When thus cheapened and then contrasted with less seriously conceived works of French or Italian character, the weaknesses of the music-drama stand revealed. What, one asks, can have been the magic which gave such power to this mixture of philosophy, philology, psychology and Northern mythology? One finds the strained alliteration and the prolix speeches intolerable; yet, despite this, the skill of the orchestration, the brooding magic of the *leitmotiv*, the erotically inspired lyricism are undeniable. These qualities are, however, too obtrusive, too obvious; their purpose is frustrated by a commonplace outlook and by want of atmosphere. Common daylight has disclosed the weakness of Wagner's work, and it is now often underestimated, probably because of intermingled *bourgeois* elements in his style and lack of spiritual unity. But his greatness, though diminished, is not dethroned.

Appreciation of Wagner's work has probably suffered

severely through a cult of Naturalism on the stage in the time of his greatest imitators. Opera is widely differentiated from other dramatic art by the magic of music, but the theatre of Ibsen and Gerhardt Hauptmann has nevertheless thrown a light on musical drama. A new stage-craft, which revivified Shakespeare on the boards, was bound to influence emotional music-drama also, and the novel histrionic art of such as the Stanislavsky troupe had somehow or other to win recognition in opera. A certain amount of naturalism was demanded even there, and the mixed art of Verism in Italy was an attempt to embody this idea. The old operatic stage-convention, a misbegotten, ramshackle offshoot of the theatre, was, nevertheless, very powerful, and was prepared to measure its strength against any claim of the human or natural to a part in musical drama. Bayreuth stands firmly, its festival tradition indifferent to the average theatre, and any attempt on the German stage to modify the accepted Wagnerian sentiment is apparently foredoomed to failure, obvious though the present intellectual bankruptcy of the music-drama may be.

Faith in the immortal greatness of the *Ring* is shattered, matter and treatment being alike too foreign to the ideals of the new age. It is like the casting-down of a great idol. In the near future, parts of the *Ring* will either be forgotten or —because there is music in them stronger than any critical theory—will be heard only on the concert platform. The heyday of music-drama is past, and even now there is a marked decline of interest in the *Tetralogy* among the general public (which has been deprived of it during the last few years), although in previous decades a pure Wagner programme was eagerly demanded.

Tristan remains sacred, but parts of the *Meistersinger* are challenged, though the glorious polyphony of the score, a certain melancholy yet characteristic humour, and its general

popularity, gave it a high place that seemed unassailable. It exercised a wonderful influence in its time. The masterly combination of ordinary speech with great music in the *Meistersinger* was of the greatest consequence for the future of opera, and not of that art only. The main structure of this incomparable work can never be prejudiced by a refusal to consider every note as absolutely sacred.

As to *Tristan*, there can be but one opinion. Here even the pessimism of Oswald Spengler hesitates. Its historic value remains unshaken; it is still the supreme expression of ecstatic human love. It strikes a note of intense solemnity, gripping performers and audience with irresistible power, raising them above their normal selves. Such an incomparable musical expression of humanity makes one forget any lapse in text, prosody or analysis—these become merely accessory. We turn to *Tristan* for music only, and we turn to it again and again with renewed wonder while the world seems to hold its breath and *Tristan* is for us the only reality. It is beloved by young and old, musical and unmusical. The young are moved, not only by its intense emotional appeal, but by the sense that it is the source of all, or nearly all, later appeals of like nature. Its lyric quality and its echo of romanticism stand out in an age of mechanism and commercialism, and when such a singer as Helene Wildbrunn sighs Isolde's last love-confession, the curtain falls on a perfectly-accomplished work.

Parsifal, on the contrary, is lost. Separation from Bayreuth, now perhaps itself lost, proved fatal to it. The weaknesses of *Parsifal*, Gurnemanz's endless dreary speeches, outworn climaxes, spring from its half-hearted conception. It falls between truth and theatricality, between acceptance and rejection of life, between Schopenhauerism and rebellion; it finds no fulfilment. The concert platform would have provided it with a more favourable *milieu* than the stage.

We may pass over such work as the *Flying Dutchman*, *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, which still live on the boards, to consider Wagner's phenomenal effect on the world of music. It is strange that one who began as a revolutionary, even in political matters, should have become a kind of apotheosis of the *bourgeois*. In the recent world crisis he throws much light on the equally critical condition of art.

Opera is not dead, but depending, as it does, more than other forms of art, on an ordered public life, it has become submerged in the great social upheaval, and creative energy has been diverted from it. It is a mixed art, obtaining strong sensuous effects by the union of seeming incompatibles, and it appears always to have depended on an aristocracy or a plutocracy. Born of a desire to resuscitate classical drama, it became the entertainment of princes and retains to this day a certain courtly magnificence. Wagner in his music-drama attempted to clothe the immaterial in the sensuous; and, although he brought the elements of purpose, personality and *ensemble* to a very perfect working unity, he also disclosed certain vulnerable points of the art.

A law to himself, Wagner's object in art was neither more nor less than the creation of a people's opera, but in this he did not succeed. The too exacting standards of his work would in themselves have defeated such a scheme. It is a question now whether, after many experiments, the new age of turmoil and social upheaval will re-create opera, or whether the art which arose so suddenly will survive its crisis only to drag on a miserable existence, till replaced gradually by new artistic forms.

Richard Wagner stated almost every problem of opera and even, impossible as it might seem, disturbed the serenity of Italy, that home of *bel canto* and the temporary operatic season. There, however, inherited operatic traditions and popular delight in sheer song were too strong for Wagner, and although he made a few vivid individual impressions,

his influence was not lasting. Certain composers, particularly Verdi, were impelled to attempt a closer interdependence of music and book, thereby limiting the freedom of the voice, with the result that we get a passionate *Othello*, a battle-ground of *bel canto*, past tradition and dramatic present; and *Falstaff*, which despite a certain reticence that gives it almost the quality of chamber-music, still shows the irrepressible individuality of the venerable composer who knew no problems.

Wagner fought for a significant *libretto* against the idea which made his art a mere pastime and a means of display for "star-singers." He strove to replace *secco recitative* by "spoken song," and to give new birth to the drama through the spirit of music. It was a mighty and, on the whole, successful effort; but immediately after, perhaps on that very account, every problem of opera arose once more. To mention one of the chief, a text full of meaning tends to be swallowed up in the music, particularly when that music, as in Wagner's work, is highly expressive; the question arises whether a strong emotional situation, powerfully expressed in music, needs the additional poetry of words. If, however, the words are to be ignored, the power of the orchestra must be limited and the work of expression must be left in a greater measure to the voice. Wagner, however, was too powerful to be bound by ordinary laws. He dominated all in his circle, and those who were inclined to accept his work at all were compelled to accept it almost whole. The sense-intoxicating quality of his music, the irresistible charm of his atmosphere, and his imperious personality, exercised a siren-like charm, enslaving the life, thought and emotions of men, inducing not only a certain response to music, but a certain outlook on life as well. He stood for an entire culture which had to be proved a failure before it could lose its power.

Wagner's period now seems remote and, but for him and his influence, would have little meaning for us to-day. In his time almost every would-be composer was burdened with the impedimenta of the German symphony writer who attempted drama without the dramatic spirit. It was an inheritance, a taint in the blood. Wagner drew his inspiration from many sources, and though he was in a sense very German, he was independent of national barriers. His followers who had none of the master's passionate inspiration, little guessed that his success was made by some qualities that were German and others that were very un-German indeed.

There is no life left in the work of August Bungert, who tried to call up the spirit of Greece by means of Wagnerian gestures, and with a few devoted followers plan a Bayreuth of his own on the Rhine; nor in the work of Alexander Ritter, who dandled the new Germany as a sentimental and family affair. The *Barber of Bagdad*, the work of an unfortunate, lyrically-gifted poet, Peter Cornelius, later swallowed up in Wagner's charmed circle, still has life in it and is a pearl of that German humour to which, it is complained, so little attention is paid; but it has its limitations, and in spite of occasional beauties, German method weighs upon it heavy as lead.

The purer air of the *Meistersinger* blows through the work of Hermann Goetz, who composed an opera on Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* in romantic style, and Engelbert Humperdinck charmed the German world with a combined echo of the fairy-tale and of the *Meistersinger*, orchestration in *Hänsel und Gretel*, *Heirat wider Willen* and *Königskinder*. Hermann Kienzl, an Austrian, expressed the spirit of folklore from *Evangelimann* to *Kuhreigen*. Leo Blech wrote the *Alpenkönig und Menschenfeind*, *Das war ich*, and *Versiegelt* with unvarying facility. The genius of Bayreuth influenced all these composers but, as it were, from a greater distance.

The tyranny of the *leitmotiv* is very apparent in the spirit-

less work of Max von Schillings, whose *Ingwelde*, *Pfeifertag* and *Moloch*, pledges of a more or less genuine devotion to Wagner, were born to an early death. He is a prolific composer for the stage. As a sympathiser with Verism, but with the soul of an unquestioning new German, he obtained great success with *Monna Lisa*, on a very effective *libretto* by Beatrice Dovsky; but it is a work created from no inner impulse, only written in a kind of musical convulsion.

Verismo is the reaction from Wagnerism in Italy. Innate love of theatrical effect made it altogether too melodramatic; the emotional situation and the *leitmotiv* were over-exploited at the expense of symphonic value. A closer connection was achieved between action and music; "spoken song" was married to recitative; the voice not deprived of leadership, but its sensuous effect strengthened by every device. Among composers of this school, Pietro Mascagni and Umberto Giordano are noteworthy, but Giacomo Puccini is outstanding. It is clear that Puccini began as a Wagnerian, but the Latin spirit prevailed. In the *cantilena* are combined the French *chanson* and the Italian *aria*; other artistic influences, also, are obvious. From the appearance of *La Bohème* with its tenderly lyrical quality, Puccini has been greeted as the saviour of opera in a time of dearth, but desire for effect seems to lead him inevitably, and, as it were, against his better nature, to such work as *Tosca*, *Madame Butterfly* and *The Girl of the Golden West*. Carefully chosen *libretti*, and skilful musical setting, account for Puccini's world-wide influence and power to please. Compared with Verdi, whose most renowned successor he is in the operatic world, his work seems thin, theatrical rather than truly passionate, full of opportunities, as in *Tosca*, for the self-display of a *prima-donna*, but a stone of offence to musicians who see the *ethos*

of music trodden underfoot. Puccini, however, came to a better frame of mind, and although the middle part of his trilogy, *Sister Angelica*, arouses the most painful feelings, the last, *Gianni Schicchi*, is a brilliant apology. It is without the genius of *Falstaff*, which it somewhat resembles, but it has grace; and the dialogue, which goes with a flourish suitable to the story, is handled in a light and masterly fashion. Altogether, the work is a real contribution to musical comedy, and has the true spirit of the *commedia dell' arte*.

German musical comedy expected great things of Eugen d'Albert, whose delicately impersonal *Abreise* (*The Departure*) seemed to be constructed on the lines of true comic opera; but he, unfortunately, saw clearly enough that sensationalism was a quicker way to theatrical success. Bizet's *Carmen* is, indeed, sensational, but it is also very human, very genuine, and deserves its lasting popularity for these reasons and for the fine *libretto* and skilful presentation. D'Albert, on the contrary, cared neither for honesty nor conscientious workmanship, and one seeks vainly for any connection between the fine exponent of Beethoven's piano works and the composer of *Tiefland* and other still less reputable works. It is strange also that a composer who began under the inspiration of Wagner's *Meistersinger* should have ended by imitating Puccini at his worst.

Puccini is peculiarly open to criticism and is freely criticised everywhere, even in his own country; but he is, nevertheless, a force to be reckoned with, an evil influence on recent opera —evil because it makes, not for the honour of a great and true individuality in the world of music, but for the debased imitation of a manner which in the imitators becomes grotesque—mere emptiness.

We have travelled far from Wagnerism, but indeed the

reaction took many forms. Pathos and humour were both discarded, metaphysics and ethics flung to the four winds, leaving a mere caricature of opera. D'Albert, a clever, artificial trickster, degraded Wagner's art to the level of operetta, forced it into the service of a sordid industry. It is the nemesis of high endeavour that not only does relaxation follow effort, but that a pursuit of big profits spoils the capacity for appreciating finer values.

Any particularly arresting situation in opera nowadays at once suggests the cinematograph, and the association of the two is certainly not unthinkable. The film gives the obvious to the eye, the music to the ear, and it is scarcely realised yet how much a sentimental tune contributes to the emotional tension. A combination of film, song and orchestra is a distinct possibility, but the present method of using music symphonically with the film is an attempt to join striking pantomime with epic.

To return to serious music, it is clear that Wagnerism, not as an idea, but through certain essential characteristics, has exercised a world-wide influence, which may be traced to-day to the remotest circles, not merely in reminiscent themes, but as unavoidable experience in form, colour and mood. The *leitmotiv* idea, when no longer used mechanically, is full of inspiration. The chromatic element of *Tristan*, on the other hand, has been taken from its proper sphere and spoiled by misuse. Wagner's palette is recognisable in the most unlikely places where his spirit is otherwise entirely changed.

The symphonic poetry of Siegmund von Hausegger is full of Wagner. His work originates in a resolute will to truth and honesty, but outworn theory cripples his imagination. The orchestration of Max von Schillings adopts Wagnerian gestures naturally enough, but they express nothing, having nothing to express.

It is noteworthy that Wagner, who would have nothing to

do with chamber-music, has strongly affected that branch of art, for example, in the work of the Norwegian, Christian Sinding.

There is little indeed in orchestral music, programme-music or otherwise, in which his influence is not to be traced. For the moderns, as we shall see, he, at the very least, opened the door.

The modern dramatic song can also be traced to Wagner, and Hugo Wolf, whose opera *Corregidor* is the one failure of a lyric writer of genius, shows again and again how much he owes him. He presents the interesting phenomenon of a song-writer who felt the charm of the romantic songs of Schubert, Schumann and Brahms, and added power to the romantic spirit by use of the *leitmotiv* and by faithfulness to the words. He composes both the song of lyrical sentiment and the song which depends on its words, *cantilena* and *recitative*, and employs an individual style for each, but the accompanying instrument rather overpowers the song.

All this came from Wagner. He built up and he cut down, he gave life and destroyed it, until he himself was swept away by the onward surge of humanity in its eternal search for new values.

CHAPTER V

THE FAITH OF ANTON BRUCKNER

It is remarkable that at a period when a type of music, whose elusive colouring symbolised a doubting mind, had been established by Wagner and had promised to dominate the future, there arose an original and forceful musician who directly opposed this tendency. He was, like Hugo Wolf, an Austrian, but the two men were very unlike in their approach to art. Wolf's interest was in the future; he was drawn to Wagner by a romantic and sensitive temperament, and his achievement was to apply the new outlook in music to song-writing. Bruckner, on the other hand, drew upon a rich inheritance of Austrian musical instinct, which he expressed with absolute faith and the downright strength of the peasant. The doubts which at once enrich and torment the modern composer were for him non-existent, and he attacked the difficulties of that sublime form, the symphony, with all the confidence of simple faith.

Circumstances and the judgment of his contemporaries connected and contrasted him with a great reactionary, Johannes Brahms, and to-day, though from a different standpoint, they must still be considered together. In Vienna they were rivals. The Northerner came there for the stimulus of Viennese instinctive musicality, and his austere symphonies and chamber-music won the approval of the Viennese; but Bruckner had great difficulty in obtaining a hearing from his compatriots, though he did at last win over a certain section of the German musical world. Brahms certainly outclasses Bruckner in the difficult medium of the sonata (symphony);

yet the latter has a congregation of his own. We do not say this merely because, from Hanslick onwards, the critics have hailed Brahms as the great revivifier of the sonata-form. Joachim and Hans von Bülow did indeed strongly influence public opinion on Brahms's behalf; but the public were quite willing to acknowledge the value of his work, and there can be no doubt that Brahms was in many ways a man of his time. It is said with some truth that he is *bourgeois* and limited; but to those who discern the deep background of his work, the restraint which marks his multiform rhythm, the earnestness which informs his symphonies and gives weight to his *adagios*, signify the victory of the spirit over stubborn material, and faithfully reflect the outlook, at once romantic and practical, characteristic of so many of the middle class. Those who are least inclined to become partisans of Brahms are forced to admit that, more than any other, he achieved a definite and original style. Though apparently reactionary, he was by no means opposed to the modern spirit.

In this matter Bruckner was very different. Wagnerians used to represent Brahms and Bruckner as opposites, and although the modern conductor and the modern concert-programme have effected a kind of reconciliation, the feud between their followers secretly persists. Bruckner is to the Brucknerians a holy mystery which only the initiated dare approach. August Halm is his prophet and has made him the creed of the Wickersdorf school. Thus, strangely enough, he dominates a section of present-day youth, and some of those most advanced in the ways of modern art do him homage. It is not a logical position. Bruckner's unproblematic and absolute affirmations are a direct contradiction of all modern music, and nothing can bridge the intervening gulf.

The connection between Wagner and Bruckner is often misunderstood. It is true that Bruckner was influenced by Wagner's work, but it was by just those elements in it which

contributed least to Wagner's general result and success. The natural simplicity and gravity of Bruckner is opposed to Wagner's futurism, his genuine religious emotion to Wagner's theatrical pathos. If there is any echo of Wagnerism in Bruckner's work it is simply because Bruckner in his humility mistook that theatrical pathos for something in which he shared, just as many Wagnerians accept it in perfect good faith. Nevertheless, this mistaken appreciation bore fruit; the Catholic faith demanded the splendour of Bruckner's orchestration. It is easy to see how the mysticism of *Lohengrin* and *Parsifal*, speaking from highest violins and penetrating brass, appeared as a revelation to the creative imagination and eager ears of the devout and reverent-minded Bruckner, and he reproduces his impressions in his own use of wind instruments and horns. His grand emotional use of the Wagnerian C major, bringing overstrung nerves and tormented senses back to serenity, strength, beauty, nature, with a single gesture, is a thing to delight mankind, and seems to have represented to him the apotheosis of his desire. He delighted in the common triad worked out, accentuated, firmly chiselled in manifold paraphrase above a powerful pedal-note. Of less consequence is his chromatic retardation, another echo, though strongly marked with his individuality, of his admiration for Wagner. It springs neither from eager senses nor a speculative mind; it remains a non-essential note, although it plays a part in enhancing the brilliance of the whole.

That whole is indeed monumentally conceived. Bruckner's serious emotion and primitive strength can only find expression in the greatest musical forms. The spirit of a man whose imagination is full of the love and fear of God endows the grave rhythm of his melody, and when the mighty diatonics of his brass thunder out, the world seems one vast cathedral.

Yet his works do not possess the flawless unity of the classical sonata (symphony). Ponderous rhythm, carefully

worked-out melody, emotion and primitive musical sense, all seem to prevent such unity. It is clear that he has in his mind the example of that master of symphony, Beethoven; yet he is unable himself to achieve that perfect self-discipline, that clear logic which breaks up melodies into motives, and motives into their atoms, so that they may all contribute in due proportion to a perfect whole. The nineteenth-century composer's sense of responsibility forces him to such self-discipline and clear thinking. He is anxious to produce genuine and original work, and tests his material with care, knowing that he is the heir of other men's labours and that many a vein has been worked out. Bruckner was troubled with no such thoughts. He took his own impulses to composition as a matter of course, and it never occurred to him to criticise any fancy which arose in him. He left matters of workmanship, as of creative imagination, to instinct alone.

Each sonata, each symphony of Beethoven, was the creation of a new type, both the expression and the fulfilment of an idea; Bruckner is the natural instinctive musician, but in the grand manner. His nine symphonies vary a little, perhaps, in individual features, but each possesses the same general physiognomy. We may refuse to contemplate the strange, doubting spirit of modern art, or we may be willing, as we listen to Bruckner's symphonies, to accept their own form as our ideal, but we are inevitably astonished by the marvel of his work, and bound to acknowledge that nothing of similar greatness has been created since Bach. Those who recognise Beethoven's sonata (symphony) as the perfection of the intellectual type and delight in his infinite variety, will consider certain of Bruckner's peculiarities as limitations, and while accepting the copious wealth of his natural inspiration, will nevertheless feel that he was born in an age to which he did not belong.

Bruckner's style can never be accused of formlessness. Each work is made up of independent, artistically-conceived sections which, however, are not always kept in due proportion. The sections are sufficient in themselves, but they do not blend, so that the result is not organic unity, but a string of phantasies held loosely together by melody. At times one is reminded of Schubert, but he, more a man of the world than Bruckner, could yet lay bare the hidden things of the soul, and by his use of colour proved himself a true progressive. Bruckner knew nothing of " mental beyonds " and his work, free from tragedy, expresses the beauty of an innocent and simple nature. He took an air and repeated it, making it an ever-increasing delight. Contrapuntal devices, especially the inversion of themes, occur frequently, but he shows no trace of those artistic nuances which are the glory of modern music and were foreshadowed in Schubert. Such romanticism as he had (in the *Romantic Symphony*, for example) was pure nature-romanticism without emotional afterthought; his elaborate codas and cadences show the same personality, the organist's delight in triads, in a sunny, shining landscape.

His spirit, dwelling in humility, was not flexible enough for humour. His security, his gravity, were far removed from Beethoven's demoniacal defiance, from Latin versatility, from the banter of programme-music, from the swaying Viennese rhythm. In their main construction his *scherzos* are like Beethoven's, but for the most part they breathe a rustic bluntness, and fall at times (as in the trios of the Second and Fourth Symphonies) into slow country waltzes. These shorter movements of Bruckner are generally terse and well-knit, and therefore make the slackness of the *finales* all the more remarkable. Even the Fourth Symphony, the noble landscape of which is more rigidly constructed, crumbles away in the *finale*. Just where Bruckner looks back over his works and strives with severe effort to sum it up in his conclusion, he

proves himself not alert enough to co-ordinate, not speedy enough to combine all in one whole. He relies as a matter of course on sequence, on the beautifully-modulated recurrence of earlier melodious phrases.

Bruckner, the singer of hymns, the man of solemn and weighty rhythm, is at his best in the *adagio*. He finds his heaven in the slow movements of his symphonies as much as in any orchestral *Mass* or *Te Deum*, and in the atmosphere of infinity which he there achieves he has no rival. Primitive strength expressed in absolute calm—it is unlike anything attempted by the artists of his time, and seems independent even of an audience. In his *adagios*, as in all his work, Bruckner is particularly free from calculated effects. He allows the strength and pathos of primitive music to well up in him unrestrained, with never a thought of the practical problems of the concert-platform. When his works came to be performed in public he found himself—helpless, as he was in worldly affairs, and too weak to assert the integrity of his work to himself and to others—obliged to agree to the shortening of his scores.

In Bruckner, music found again its age of innocence. His symphony—for all his symphonies are one—lies like some mighty monument of a bygone race across the pathway of the new music. To participate in it fully, a man must receive it as a grace in absolute humility, at the same time utterly renouncing all part in later developments of art.

Bruckner is the idol of the mystics, the rallying-point of many stricken souls whom no ordinary interpreter, relying for effect upon orchestral technique, can satisfy. Only a conductor naturally serious and humble-minded, of conviction and spiritual experience, can achieve the synthesis of these passive, contemplative works.

Yet, pure and humble-minded as his music is, he will not bear comparison with Bach. Bach's form, which many fore-

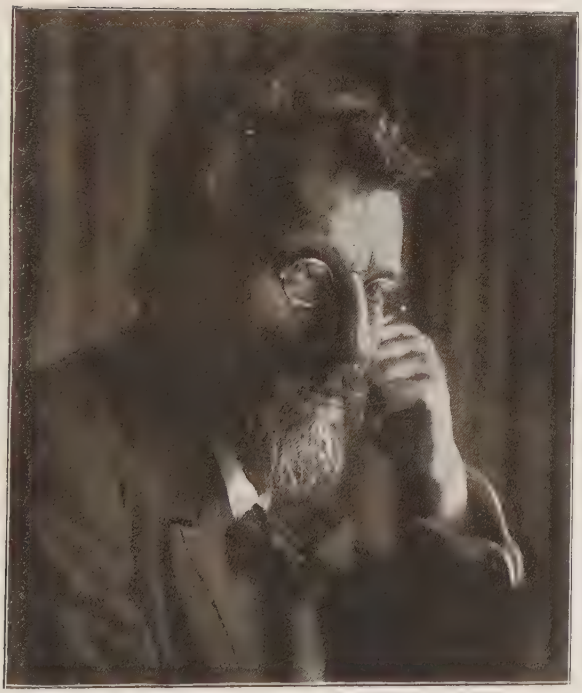
runners had moulded to the highest degree of intellectual and technical perfection, makes Bruckner's seem by comparison fortuitous; and, moreover, Bach's music of faith, the product of a different age, was at the same time the work of a fully-awakened mind. It is unlikely that Bruckner, South-German and limited as he is, will win the ear of the great world, for all the rich beauty of his work. The world's public demands a perfect relationship between tension and relaxation in form. Bruckner's form arouses perpetual expectation of a conclusion without satisfying it. He will remain the possession of a few, but he will, at least for a time, lead many a weary futurist back to the source of music.

CHAPTER VI

THE DIDACTICISM OF HANS PFITZNER

The ethical sense which lies at the root of all that is most valuable and significant in German music tends, at times, to become over-developed, and to thwart the creative impulse. This ethical point of view in the German sense was not at all characteristic of the Austrian Bruckner, in whose simple soul was no trace of didacticism, yet the tendency to probe and moralise was rampant in many who surrounded him and exists in nearly all who worship him whole-heartedly to-day. It is obvious that ethics and ideas remain indispensable in music—in Wagner they begot the will to dramatise and were linked to calculated theatrical effects—nevertheless without the fire of the senses they cannot be artistically creative. At times the didactic propensity, over-analysis, the expression of social ideals, become excessive, smother the creative fire and destroy the work of art.

A short consideration of the work of Friedrich Klose is a proper introduction to a study of the ethical composer, Hans Pfitzner. Friedrich Klose, a curious, hybrid, half-original, half-imitative musician, formed one of Bruckner's circle and learned strict counterpoint from him. He is fertile in ideas, hovers between romantic and programme music, is highly susceptible to outside influence and is innately incapable of conceiving music apart from a mental picture. He needs a body of doctrine on which to find a firm basis, but he believes that his own ideas, pale reflections of those of his time, render it superfluous. So-called Neo-romanticism has given a fictitious value to dilettantism, but this Klose renounced reluctantly on the



Hans Pfitzner

advice of Mottl, who was at one time a follower of Bruckner. Fundamentally, Klose feels his bondage to Bruckner irksome. The master whom he came to know first as an admiring listener to his mighty improvisations in the church at Bayreuth, initiated him into the mysteries of counterpoint, but as Bruckner had never grasped the sonata-form, except as understood in Sechter's *Rudiments of Musical Grammar*, nor enriched that form in his own work, he was of course unable to assist his somewhat half-hearted disciple in that direction.

Both the matter and the technique of this remarkable man may be called hybrid. He is not a dilettante, but he never became a master of form, nor, through many changes, did he ever find a style that really suited his creative impulses without contradicting his intentions. The pedagogue in him hampers his romantic and programme music; Bayreuth is a perpetual stumbling-block to him, and what original imagination he possessed has been spoiled in its development by the threefold influences of Wagner, Liszt and Berlioz. Temperate by nature and choice, he attempts to establish a type for every species, but the literary idea is again and again too strong for his musical inspiration, and the result lacks finality. He borrowed the subject and underlying thought for his symphonic poem, *Das Leben ein Traum* (*Life a Dream*), from the pessimist philosophy of Julius Bahnsen, a slightly modified Schopenhauerism. *Ilsebill* (*The Fisher and his Wife*), a work for the stage, is a poetic version of a rough draft left by the composer's father. In *Ilsebill* he has tried to tack on to a fairy tale a deeply significant idea of high aspiration and disastrous fall, but it is unlikely to have permanent value either on the stage or the concert-platform. *Der Sonne Geist* (*The Sun Spirit*) for soli, chorus, orchestra and organ is founded on an obscure poem by Alfred Mombert. In each of these works Klose attempts a new departure in form. *Ilsebill* is a dramatic symphony; *Der Sonne Geist* is derived

from oratorio; but didacticism and moral purpose serve only to emphasise the hybrid character of these works, and neither the prelude and the double fugue, with four trumpets and four trombones at the close (an offering to the *manes* of Bruckner), nor the string-quartet—"A tribute paid in four instalments to their worships the schoolmasters of Germany" —can disguise the inner disunion. Despite occasional side-glances towards typically modern music, the progressive spirit is cheated. Lack of creative imagination is obvious.

Friedrich Klose is a noteworthy though not a powerful member of the Munich circle whose leader was Ludwig Thuille, composer of *Lobetanz*, an opera more full-blooded than the work of Klose, though it has similar hybrid qualities. Others of the circle who attained local celebrity are August Reuss and Johann Kaspar Schmid.

Far and away above this group of somewhat ineffective Neo-German Neo-romantics, Hans Pfitzner blazes his own path to fame. He possesses certain clearly-marked traits in common with the second generation of Wagnerians, but is distinguished from them by a very individual creative talent. All that he is and all that he does is full of character and has breadth and significance. What defects he has bear the impress of his personality, and are the defects of his qualities.

He has been called a Romantic, but it is a romanticism subordinated to understanding and purpose. Romanticism at the present day always has something autumnal about it; it is not a possible attitude for a true son of this era, but, in addition to this, other elements cloud the sources of Pfitzner's inspiration. He looks backwards; he is typical of the *bourgeois* ideals of education. He has the scholar's interest in solving historical enigmas, rejoices in the poetry and wisdom of the past, and is convinced that the present is a time of decline.

Knowing little of affairs he has never attained the public recognition which he believes his due, and the whole business side of art at the present time is hateful to him. With increasing self-knowledge he tilts against the fashions of the period, using his knowledge of music, philosophy, philology and aesthetics as weapons for the fight. The more he sees the consequences of what he believes to be disintegrating forces, the more he becomes the pedagogue, and during the late war, which overthrew all his ideals, he wrote leading articles, musical polemics, which had a marked influence on those who seek in art a basis of conviction.

Nothing short of the creative strength of Richard Wagner could enable a composer of such deeply ethical purpose, such penetrating understanding, to achieve expression without confusion. As a matter of fact the author of *On Musical Drama* (*Vom musikalischen Drama*) does succeed in carrying on the Wagner tradition, but his gift is not altogether in accord with the subject of his work, nor is it, generally speaking, powerful enough to support the burden of his comprehensive philosophy. Pfitzner really wishes to use the stage as a means of expression, yet he constantly draws away from it. His markedly non-sensuous nature is against it, preventing him from finding there the *milieu* for the poetic expression of his moral outlook. He feels obliged to use his Wagnerian inheritance, and accordingly studies methods of theatrical presentation, but at heart he loves Schumann, feels the spell of elfish dance and fairy ring, is indeed in certain qualities of bitterness, reserve and subtle brooding very like Brahms. He wavers between the opposite poles of opera and chamber-music, and this affects his technique, which, although it gives in enhanced form the beauties of the romantic style and adopts modern ideas as to colour, sometimes evinces by an obstinate revival of horizontal part-music more learning than originality. His object is clearly announced in a powerful

rhythm which from time to time gives proof of a faculty for development of form, but for all that his work is not homogeneous, not fused by the fire of the senses, seldom evoking a clear image. Romance, dreaminess, thirst for knowledge, ethical purpose and effort to impress a meaning—these are the qualities of Pfitzner's work. His uncompromising individuality is obvious and all the more striking by contrast with contemporaneous habits of thought. A Wagnerian with a sense that Wagner's mission is not yet fulfilled, a descendant of Schumann and Brahms by the nature of his talent, Pfitzner might have found a means of reconciling opposites had he not been constantly checked by rigid convictions, a superfluity of character and theory.

As a Wagnerian imbued with the philosophy of Schopenhauer, he expressed the typically Wagnerian idea of *deliverance* in two music-dramas, and again, in the fulness of his powers, with all the earnestness, wisdom and solemnity at his command, in *Palestrina*.

Pfitzner's love of the Middle Ages, his visionary tendency, is expressed in *Der arme Heinrich*, a legend of a knight who was cleansed from leprosy through the sacrifice of a Swabian maiden. The author, James Grun, however, fails to make Hartmann von der Aue consistent and convincing throughout, although occasional scenes are excellently written. The composer is carried away by a passion of grief, pity and ecstasy, the spirit of Wagner is strong in him, notably in his use of " spoken song " and orchestra; yet he seems to get lost in his dreams; harshness and delicacy, the archaic and the modern, " Wagner " and " Brahms," mingle but do not blend. The orchestra trembles under the breath of romanticism; will and understanding struggle in vain to join what refuses to be joined; the work has not the quality of directness which gives life, but it is nevertheless one of the highest achievements of the post-Wagnerian music-drama.

Pfitzner's second act of faith in Wagnerian doctrine is *Die Rose vom Liebesgarten*, the production of which at the Opera of Vienna, through the sympathy and interest of Gustav Mahler, was so deeply impressive that again and again, under the spell of delightful memories, one is tempted to build too much upon it. This is, however, mere delusion. The whole of *Die Rose vom Liebesgarten*, including Grun's libretto, is imitative, not original. Once again it is as though the nature-spirits, the little people of moor and wood, had by their spells charmed Pfitzner, the fairy-tale teller, away from the realities of the stage to a far country. Here and there he achieves romance, but ultimately he seems to lose himself in a maze of names and words, a desert of meaningless mythology.

For a long time Pfitzner composed no more music-dramas and endured the disillusionments of one who sees his contemporaries going after other gods. As conductor of a theatre orchestra he was in his own way productive, and his activities in Strasburg undoubtedly influenced his work.

Pfitzner, true German as he is, has suffered unprecedented neglect at the hands of his countrymen. This is to be accounted for partly by the fact that he lives in a utilitarian age and his work, neither typical of the time nor easy to classify, is particularly unmarketable. A few songs such as *Sonst* and *Gretel* are to be heard from time to time in the concert-room, and a ballad, *Die Heinzelmännchen*, attracts because its instrumentation imparts such remarkably grotesque and intense life to the little dwarfs. Some of his chamber-music, too, such as the pianoforte trio, Op. 8, a few quartets, etc., in which his love of the romantic mingles strangely with an obstinate didacticism which obscures beauty, is performed occasionally. All this work has unquestionable sincerity and a high

degree of contrapuntal skill, but caprices of style do, none the less, from time to time produce a spasmodic effect.

During the pause in his activities as composer, Pfitzner, surrounded by a throng of disciples, became a determined reactionary. The more he withdrew from a world which misunderstood him, the more bitter and defiant he became. As he reaches maturity, intellectual activity preponderates in him and interpenetrates the visionary side of his nature. He fights passionately for his principles. To hear Pfitzner in the fulness of his powers conduct Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* or Schumann's *Symphony in D minor* is to realise that, underlying all his pedagogic and premeditative qualities, there is originality of conception and deep understanding, springing from the intuition of a creative musician.

The fruit of his quiescent period was *Palestrina*. During this time his followers had increased in number, and it is not surprising to find among them such an one as Thomas Mann, whose democratic mind gropes slowly, deliberately, progressively, for some satisfying philosophy of life. He was naturally drawn to Pfitzner, who uses all the resources of ripe artistic understanding and keen historic judgment for the tireless promulgation of his creed.

Palestrina, a "musical legend," is highly self-conscious romanticism. It is inspired by suffering, the work of a sorely-tried man, and reminds one of the like origin of the *Missa Papæ Marcelli*. The aim of *Palestrina* is to reveal the sources of the composer's inspiration, to show the origins of his work, to proclaim his victory in his struggles with men and ideas. But it is a clouded triumph and what one may call "the self-apotheosis" of the close is not free from bitterness. The philosophy of Schopenhauer is in both root and branch of this work.

It is curious that a work intended to honour creative art, to show the creative artist as one above and beyond the things

of this world, should be so little blessed with inspiration. Learning, will, purpose, were the forces which begot it, without a trace of that fantastic romanticism which seemed to be, and indeed was, one of Pfitzner's essential attributes. Neglecting all non-essentials, the composer aims at something monumental. The composition is packed with the results of hard work, anything of an erotic nature is decisively barred, woman appearing as the protectress of inspiration and in no other *rôle*. This idea is successful. At the particular moments when the inner meaning of the creative act is revealed by a creative artist, we realise that here is an original and absorbing piece of work. The scene of the vision of the dead composers who charge Palestrina to create anew, is perhaps merely a clever stage device of little musical value; nevertheless Pfitzner attains an intellectual harmony rare in modern opera. Much of it is somewhat laboured. The revival of mediæval, polyphonic music is simply an example of Pfitzner's perversity, a piece of toilsome ingenuity. Skilful craftsmanship pervades the whole, and is very noteworthy in the spacious Act II., the Council of Trent, where the coinage of the *Meistersinger* is systematically reissued, bearing, however, the stamp of Pfitzner. The orchestral intricacies, the use of the voices in the manner of "spoken song," all combine to produce a deliberately non-sensuous effect quite unparalleled.

Palestrina is a considerable intellectual and ethical achievement, the high-water mark of a career in which strength of purpose has predominated over an artistic talent by no means trifling. In ethical pathos, in welding poetic and musical talents in a single work, it is a last example of successful Wagnerism. The poetry and music are full of high mission, but they spring from mental activity alone without Wagner's transforming sensuousness, and even with this they could not have been successful. The matter of the work being Italian, such asceticism seems doubly strange. *Palestrina* will

always be considered good work, but only a highly-finished performance can bring out its qualities. In this respect it is more Wagnerian than Wagner, yet it lacks the vitality to persist as a commemorative festival work.

Other works of Pfitzner are musical settings for Ibsen's *Das Fest auf Solhaug*, and *Kätchen von Heilbronn*, which add little to our survey; and *Das Christelflein*, intended as a Christmas play, shows little understanding of childish romance, and is only a musical counterpart of a very second-rate libretto.

Pfitzner's personality, to sum up, is a gnarled and tangled thicket of mingled qualities—of the romantic, the aesthetic, the poet, the student, the musician, and the schoolmaster. His work will have value only in the history of the development of music; but he himself remains, in spite of limitations, one of the greatest Germans of the age.

CHAPTER VII

FOLK-MUSIC

We now come to an offshoot of Romanticism which has survived both the intellectualisation of music and the modern attempts at new forms.

All art is rooted in the folk, but with time outgrows their primitive lore. As music is exploited and made public, it tends naturally to break away from its origins. In the glare of world competition and criticism, music of a local or provincial type dies off, but not without throwing up unobtrusive shoots which proclaim the relationship between the folk-tune and the higher developments of musical art.

Meanwhile the marvels of musical culture are becoming more and more accessible. Organisation has made it possible, by means of large numbers united in orchestra and chorus, to illustrate with increasing perfection the great musical forms, and there has arisen a new attitude in spectators and audiences, a new relationship between performers and public. Art is no longer of the folk, but it has become popular, its popularity dwelling in a true community of spirit between givers and receivers.

At a time when the higher forms of instrumental music are becoming popular, there appears that offshoot of the Romantic movement mentioned above. Folk-music, hitherto cut off from the main body of musical culture, seems to have become suddenly vocal, demanding a share in the privileges of organisation which determine for good or ill the fate of a modern work of art. We hear on all sides of the upward strivings of Northern, Slavonic, Hungarian, Bohemian and even non-European types. Musicians, and others who are something less, invite the racial

spirit, hitherto dwelling modestly in song and dance, to fill the wider sphere of the symphony. Grieg, Dvořák, Smetana, Tchaikovsky, are each and all intent on coupling their national music with the great European stream, on making it universally acceptable. The world regards their attempts with both wonder and hope. Strangeness of harmony, of rhythm and time, are stimulating to somewhat *blasé* tastes, and suggest, even to intellectuals, possibilities of something new in music. Each composer has a characteristic palette, the Northerner's vaguely mournful, the Slav's between extremes of tumult and collapse, the Bohemian's troubled and stormy, with an ever-present visionary background of the land which bore him and left its impress upon him. Such music satisfies in its hearers, to whom it transfers its own visions, the eternal human longing for a land that is very far off; the charm of the winds of the world blows through it.

The high hopes which greeted this type of music are unlikely to be fulfilled. The more provincial, individual and brightly-coloured it is, the less likely is it to form a constructive element in the development of musical composition. Certain races have long contributed a share to that end. The Danes, never rich in local colour, have exchanged any individuality they may once have possessed for a classical Mendelssohnian manner. The music of the Hungarians, or perhaps rather of the gypsies who dwell among them, is wild, melancholy, aboriginal, but the cosmopolitan Liszt who investigated and in his writings acclaimed Magyar music, echoed it in his own work only in the form of rhapsodies and in loosely-constructed fantasies of a *virtuoso* type. Apart from this, even in Haydn's time, Magyar music showed itself capable of refreshing departures in rhythm and harmony; yet it has never produced anything great or original.

The question before us is this. Can regional music, now claiming a place in progressive musical culture, arrest the disintegration of the sonata-form, or render it compatible with the modern outlook? The first is an impossibility, as we shall see; but the second may be brought about under certain conditions.

Peculiarity of harmony and rhythm, both of which are very closely interlocked, leads inevitably away from polyphony towards homophony. This tendency is bound to become more and more marked. Melody, in clear-cut rhythmical shape, is supported on a background of new and fascinating colour; but these unfamiliar chords stand in the way of the elaboration of structural polyphony as it existed in the motif-development of the classical sonata. This is frequently apparent in music of the regional type, which, outwardly reconciled with the great forms of instrumental music, yet remains inwardly bounded by the small forms, songs and dances, whence it arose.

Music of this type lacks sophistication, and it is useless to expect it to arrest the decay of the sonata. What value it has, lies in its fresh naturalness; what harmonic surprises it offers in the guise of attractive tunes, arise in natural sensuousness and delight in colour; the place of sensibility is taken by overflowing high spirits. It is, however, just these qualities which Chopin contributed to the new developments in music. His drowsy harmonies, his twilight pitch, despite a certain drawing-room atmosphere, gave rise to the enharmonic devices, the substitutions, which were to permeate music like a sweet poison and also carry it on to a new stage. Chopin mingled the spirit of Poland with that of cosmopolitan France, but he never succeeded in blending them absolutely. For a long time, Chopin was the only composer of the national type who followed the way of the new music.

Many Russians and Bohemians aspire to a share in Western

symphonic and chamber music. The Bohemians have always been the most naturally musical people in Europe, song and dance being the bases of their musical forms, strings and voices the instruments through which they found perfectly adequate expression. While it is true that in the past the great instrumental forms of music were developed from the dance, it is also true that it is now too late in the day to graft a wilding branch on the highly-cultivated stock of modern music. Primitive art is a pleasant diversion for the overburdened soul of Europe, but cannot free it from the weight of the past, nor help in the quest for new forms. Dvořák and Smetana added an element of pure entertainment to the modern concert-programme by providing symphonic and chamber music in a more natural, less intellectual form, substituting, in fact, the suite for the symphony. Dvořák, attracted by the Neo-German movement, attempted the "symphonic poem" in Wagnerian style, but in so doing lost his freshness and charm without achieving the intellectual. Smetana, on the other hand, in the *Verkaufte Braut* (*Bartered Bride*), not only attempted but succeeded most delightfully in a combination of Bohemianism and Mozart, expressing unspoiled nature to perfection. *Dalibor*, designed to be a typically Bohemian opera, is a disconnected and hybrid piece of work, and it is clear enough that Bohemian national music can be nothing more than a pleasant interlude in the wider music of the world. Programme-music and modernism stand in the way.

The Russian composer is for the most part an amateur. There is no general and widespread culture in which he can find natural growth. A soldier or an engineer sets out to construct a national music on the grand scale. The very nature of the Russians and their inborn musical susceptibility lay them open to every musical influence from German symphony to French and Italian opera. French culture of the *salons* has spread itself from the Court and upper circles

of society over all Russian art, and the famous Court Ballet is a magical compound of passionate love of the dance and unexampled natural aptitude with traditional French forms. Russian minor key, Byzantine stiffness, Oriental sensuousness and love of pageantry, half-Asiatic rhythms, delight in sweet sound, the lethargy of generations—these are the elements of Russian music. The many races of Russia contribute an almost inexhaustible supply of folk-songs; and Russia herself now reaches out hands to Europe.

The most European of Russian composers is Tchaikovsky, not by virtue of intellect, for his natural musical gift was never modified by any influence more violent than Schumann and French perfumery. His opera, *Eugen Onegin*, is a more faithful reflection of the Russian spirit than *The Queen of Spades*. He scarcely knows the meaning of intellectual construction, and the principle of the *motiv*, developed through decades of cultivation, does not exist in his work. He constructs at haphazard and not of necessity. He has none of the absolute quality of that true Russian and self-lacerator, Dostoievsky. The cries forced from Tchaikovsky by his milder forms of self-torment are frequent, but not very harrowing. The famous *Pathetic Symphony* is probably about the deepest expression we have of this condition of soul; charming, full of fancy, full of colour and rhythm, it is in no sense a modern work, but has, nevertheless, distinct value.

Certain true Russians, determined to have done with dilettantism, and to develop the artistic side of the race, grouped themselves about Balakiref, a great pianist and acute critic with a strong disciplinary influence over his followers. Cesar Cui, Borodin, Mussorgsky, and Rimsky-Korsakof, who is the first thoroughly-accomplished exponent of the Russian spirit in music, all experienced the charm of his personality. Yet of these disciples, Mussorgsky, long dead as he is, will exercise the greatest influence on the music of the future.

The Russian spirit is none the less original for being highly receptive. The ambition of the Russian to play a part in world music is hampered by no tradition; he eagerly adopts European musical science, translating it into his own idiom. His introspective nature, even his national alcoholism, has led to new discoveries in music; and he was spiritually in touch with, if not in advance of, the most modern musical development, even before the tours of able conductors had made German and other instrumental music familiar to Russian audiences. Dargomijsky and Mussorgsky are among the prophets which Russia has given to the world. They patiently await the recognition which will surely come.

Scandinavia has not played a distinguished part in the contest. In Norway, Grieg is very limited, while Sinding practises the great musical forms at the sacrifice of a national manner. Sweden has its Sjögren, but is behind in technique. There is apparent an almost universal attempt to find a short cut to musical culture, Germany remaining both model and preceptor. It is, however, too late in the day to hope, even by the most intensive cultivation, to develop a musical sense in a people organically. The natural backwardness of the North is a reflection of its climate and landscape; it has none of the primitive musical aptitude of Bohemia and the Slavs. The sad aspect of nature and Russian oppression fostered in Finland the quiet and delicate art of Jean Sibelius, but even he was caught in the toils of "local colour," and found it difficult to attain symphonic form. He is, however, closely associated with modern picturesque music, the nature of which we shall discuss more thoroughly later.

For centuries the imagination of Europe has revelled in the exotic, finding there, through story-teller and poet, a refuge from the commonplace in everyday life. The spirit of adventure which inspired Robinson Crusoe has affected music also. In music an exotic atmosphere is attained all the more

perfectly in that the precision of words is neither sought nor attained; under the spell of unfamiliar rhythms and intervals, of tam-tam, tambourine, castanets, the fancy of those sensitive to music is filled with vague images of distant lands. This is on the romantic side; afterwards the science of folk-lore brings exact research to bear on non-European music, making possible its absorption in the main stream of art.

The earliest exotic influences came from the East. In France, where visual things make so strong an appeal, poets sang the praises of the "Land of the Rising Sun," and music of an Oriental type was early attempted. It was mere play from David's *Le Désert* to Délibes' *Lakmé*, an essentially trivial, iridescent form, a game, in which the cool, able, French mind amused itself with bright pebbles. Its rhythmic basis was the dance, but in Bizet, who after *The Pearl Fishers*, *Djamileh* and *The Arlésienne* achieved *Carmen*, the exotic dance rhythm is full of the pulse of life. Its inspiration may not be strictly Oriental, but Spain, far behind in European civilisation, is very near the East in spirit.

The genius of a French composer extracted the musical essences of the South American *habanera* and *seguidilla*, of Creole savagery, of that gipsydom which is really a collective denotation hard to define, and blended them in *Carmen* to an expression of human passion which has a universal human appeal.

Elements of the music of all nations seek in modern music their true fulfilment; what began in play ends in earnest.

It is a relief to turn from this orgy of brilliance and local colour to German music, which by the very lack of these qualities early revealed its depths. German folk-song, ringing the changes on the dominant and the tonic, monotonous in rhythm, contained the germs of both sensibility and harmless

gaiety. Its special attribute was universality, and great future possibilities lay in its simplicity, other-worldliness, mysticism. The piety and grave measure of the *chorale* strengthened this folk-music yet more, while its harmony, colourless and horizontal in structure, was the nucleus of polyphony which, through all adventures and experiments, German music can never altogether lose.

The Austrian element is a wholesome corrective to the over-earnest and sober qualities in German music, striking a more personal note, speeding the soaring flight. Its swinging, jovial rhythm, the basis of country-dance and waltz, inspired Lanner and Strauss, and, one must sorrowfully confess, some modern operettas, but it has, too, as is apparent in Schubert, an underlying sadness. It is ripe to blend with the modern spirit, a fact which brings us to the consideration of Mahler.

CHAPTER VIII

GUSTAV MAHLER

MAHLER is a problem, one might almost say a *cause célèbre*, and a mass of literature, eulogistic and otherwise, has accumulated about his name. We may discuss Strauss, Reger, Pfitzner, coolly; but on a subject like Mahler, who touches us more nearly, it must be difficult for the modern musical critic to write calmly. His personality, moreover, is of a type that arouses controversy. He hurried through life in a fever of creative ardour, attempting at one and the same time to revolutionise the theatre and to leave to the world, after the example of the great masters, nine symphonies. He wrought at white heat and his work, highly provocative, bears traces of continuous tension.

Mahler was a Jew—a Jew, moreover, of the new epoch—and a composer of symphonic works in the grand style. The question, "Can the apparently dead symphonic form, consecrated by Beethoven, be reborn in a Jew?" need not surprise us. It is not uncommon for the connection of race with music to be superficially scrutinised and spitefully pilloried, to the detriment of unbiassed judgment on the aims and ideals of composers. Those, however, who wish to do Mahler justice, must not overlook his Judaism as a contributory element of power in his work. Jewish blood is not a negligible quantity; eternally restless, it reacts in many ways, destructively as well as constructively, but true Judaism has a capacity for an ennobling and fruitful union with surrounding Teutonism, whence may spring the man of metaphysical intellect, intense emotion, psychic sensibility

and broad international sympathies. Judaism was deeply rooted in Mahler's unusual personality, complicating for him the problems of the modern spirit. His nervous sensibility constantly threatened to wreck his physique; for though he accounted himself a thorough German, his energy was purely nervous. He defended his intense emotionalism and his metaphysical leanings with the passion of a fanatic. His intimacy with nature was profound, one might also add *naïf*. He wished to stand for the people of Austria, but he was goaded and tormented under the threefold burden of modernity, Judaism, and a tendency to imitate the composers whom he ardently admired. The echo of this agony resounds through his music, and accounts for its many contradictions, for a certain superficiality, an ironic treatment of small matters, coupled with a genius for interpreting nature. Most notable of all, a token of his race, is something Christ-like in him, contending for righteousness.

These complexities of character become clearer with study. He threw himself into both original and imitative creation with equal enthusiasm. He was the consummation of the German Jew; Wagner's saying, "A German does a thing for its own sake," was for him, "A German wears himself out in a cause." He lived in a state of incessant nervous tension, goading himself remorselessly.

This fanatic zealot had, nevertheless, a remarkably clear insight into his own character, recognising, unwillingly, his weaknesses and flaws. Because of this self-consciousness, essentially genuine as he was, he posed to himself a little, drawing a veil over his own failings. He could not altogether forgo the *beaux gestes*, the pathos, of his idol, Wagner. He had unusual gifts of mimicry and the passion of an actor for the world of the stage, to which he gave fine work, but the metaphysical side of his nature fled from the atmosphere of the theatre and found fulfilment in another world, the world

of the symphony. It was his fate to be torn between the two. As he turned his back on the stage, it was with the tormented sense of a task only half fulfilled. He loathed the business side of it, yet longed to complete the work which he regarded as a mission. This continuous conflict between original and imitative impulses, between theatre and symphony, was the cause of nervous overstrain; and perpetual unrest was ever behind his creative work.

For the same reason he could do nothing final, but was ever making a new beginning. In a kind of frenzy he produced work after work, each unsparing of self, each exact in detail, each a self-revelation made with the fervour of an actor and expressed with the lucidity learned from his experience as a conductor, yet lacking finality.

Between the artist and the public a gulf is fixed. Every artist feels this loneliness, but Mahler felt it more than most. By nature he was reserved; yet he had an urgent desire to communicate himself to others, to win the love of his fellow-men. Hence results the paradox of the shy man, who in attempting to cover his shyness, makes an exaggerated display of emotion.

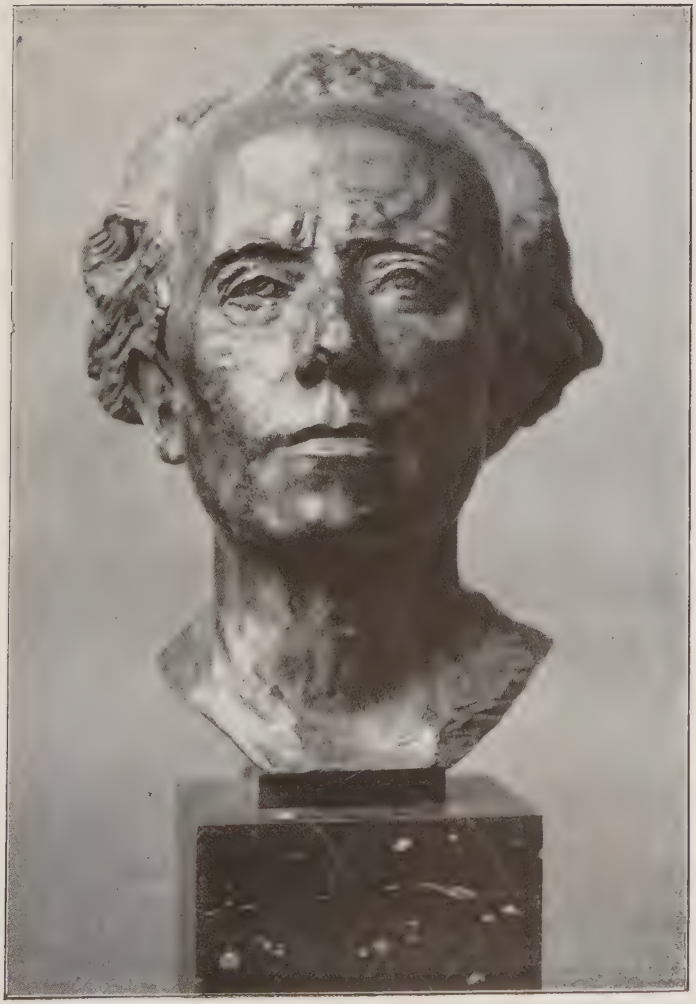
There are traces in Mahler of Dostoievsky's ecstatic horror, and indeed Mahler seems to have recognised a kindred spirit in this writer whom he loved; but, on another side, he had much in common with the man of intellect—Goethe. He reminds one of Faust in his longing for that illumination which is not for the sons of earth. In the realms of music he looked to Beethoven and to Wagner, honouring Beethoven as an architect, but Wagner as something yet more than a musician. He felt himself an executor of the Bayreuth inheritance. Even when professional duty committed him to an operatic repertory inconsistent with the creed of Bayreuth, he did his utmost to raise it to a more Wagnerian level. His metaphysical and ethical trend also, the desire to serve mankind, not merely the theatre, bound him to Wagner; but on the

purely musical side he differed from him widely. The self-tormenting ecstatic, the psychic subject haunted by uncanny forms, the mystic moving in regions not realised, was at heart homesick for the world of instinctive music, in which his being had its roots. Trumpet-calls, marching rhythms, roll of drums, peasant-dances, country sights and sounds, were the transoms of his art. He understood the poetry in primitive sounds, yet produced no genuinely homely work, because restlessness, scepticism, his over-sensitive nervous make-up in short, overthrew faith and *naïveté* in the critical moment of creation; and his acute intellect often gave an ironical twist to what should have been instinctive. He could neither admit nor exclude the sources of torment in himself, and so he remained at heart "diatonic."

No such contradictory nature had previously sought expression in the symphony. Mahler's symphonic work is psychologically important, as the revelation of a distraught soul; and musically important, as exhibiting a blend of the most primitive with the most modern in music. As a musician, Mahler looks to the past; as a psychological type, he looks to the future; he is more creative in the latter than in the former rôle, stronger where he appears weaker, but most certainly he was never born to become a classic.

Mahler's treatment of melody is unprecedented; one might suppose that all past developments in this branch of music had been obliterated from his consciousness. Bruckner must, indeed, be excepted; but it is impossible to make a serious comparison between his crystal-clear soul and Mahler's turbid spirit. Bruckner is truly *naïf*, while Mahler expresses his *naïveté* and gives it force in the full consciousness of his heritage from Berlioz, Wagner and Liszt.

Mahler desired to communicate his thoughts, unmistak-



GUSTAV MAHLER
(After the bust by Auguste Rodin)

ably, in primitive language to the world, and sought to make his melodies stand out as clearly as possible. As a conductor he bent his energies to the absolute elucidation of the meaning of a work—just as, when writing letters, he tended almost morbidly to underline what he thought essential; and, in developing a theme, his aim was ever to convey it to the mind with emphatic clearness. To achieve this, he makes every part sing. In Wagner, otherwise so unlike him, this same emphasis of the melody sometimes occurs (for instance, in the last act of *Siegfried*), but Mahler, with his nervous temperament and acute sensitiveness to sound, goes much further in the attempt to express his *naïveté* in the most forcible style he could find. One repeatedly hears this style, which somewhat destroys the unity of his work, called primitive; but its artlessness is in reality the latest product of a long course of development, a blend of the conscious and the unconscious, a nervous hypersensitiveness always on the watch to reject the fortuitous in the performance, yet unwilling to take the printed score as final. The tone-value peculiar to an instrument, its graduated *unisono*, its registers, the independence of the wood-wind, the ingenious use of percussion instruments, the curious attraction of the D and E flat clarinets, the revaluation of certain formerly merely accessory instruments of the orchestra, such as the harp as a solo instrument, and, last but not least, the tender and searching study of violin tone (for instance, in the Fourth Symphony), all this, and more, under the constant direction of innumerable expression-marks, secures the singing of the instruments. This over-emphasis is, as a matter of fact, not due to the modern temperament, but to a highly sensitive ear; for colour, as colour, is not sought after; and a haze over details resulting from colouring is as much shunned in the "vertical" treatment as any substitution of colour for development. On the contrary, the development is prolonged, curtailment of expression being no part of Mahler's

plan. Excitable as he is, he is in no hurry when it is a question of clearness. The fanatic objectivity with which he conducted Wagner's work he applies to his own compositions. He will allow nothing to oppose his progress. Possessed by the spirit of primitive music, directed to ethical and metaphysical ends, he is determined that his titanic schemes shall be fully worked out.

Yet it is remarkable how his plans are crossed, through the contradictions of his own nature. The plastic emergence of a melody, however fundamental, into prominence, is not sufficient matter for an entire symphony, particularly when the composer's almost hysterical frenzy is bound to cause certain abruptnesses. A sudden outcry rings through the orchestra—one recalls Berlioz—and for the moment all melodious beauty is lost; or again, a tornado of percussion instruments, meant to signify "world-music," almost takes away one's breath, or a shake, in which even the trombones participate, whispers some deep secret. Such abruptnesses, arising in Mahler's nervous temperament, pierce the very vitals of his works. Moreover, the melody is too diffuse to admit of a balanced development. Each part is tuneful, but we get no nearer to polyphony. The work becomes markedly homophonic, the "vertical" treatment dominates, and even colour as colour becomes more prominent than the composer intends. A confusion of styles becomes increasingly obvious, revealing Mahler's lacerated soul and the lack of organic unity in his symphonies. There is, however, a true world of music in his restless dynamic orchestration, a sincerity of feeling which not even theatrical pathos can disguise, perhaps because Mahler always took the theatre in dead earnest.

The clarity with which Mahler's melodies are set forth exposes the carelessness of their construction. The echoing or borrowing of an idea may be justified by its successful adaptation to the new context, and hunting for resemblances

and coincidences is in any case a thankless task; but it must be admitted that Mahler was an unusually open and shameless plagiarist, often making no effort at all even to develop on his own lines the thoughts he took from others. Had he been a composer of programme-music, a colourist, the underlying idea of his compositions would have been comparatively unimportant; but he was on his own showing an "absolute" musician. He paid Beethoven and Wagner the *naïf* tribute of borrowing their ideas; it is a striking instance of the confusion between originality and imitativeness in his nature. He expended little trouble on his melodies, taking them at random from nature, from folk-songs and dances. Occasionally such a theme passes, in the course of a symphony, through most astonishing metamorphoses, worthy of a primitive fairy-tale—the cuckoo's cry in the First Symphony is an example; but this is exceptional, a somewhat too obvious emotionalism usually working against this method of treatment. This brings us once more to the question, "What was the value of the underlying idea in Mahler's work?" Mahler's over-subtle reasoning, his passionate grappling with universal concepts, his God-seeking idealism, his musicianship, all determined the form and outline of his symphonic work; but organic unity ultimately depends on creative imagination in the whole and in every part. Our admiration for Mahler's work need not blind us to its weak points. It has been suggested that an architect has the right to do as he will with his building materials, however poor in themselves these may be. This is a possible, though not, perhaps, quite a satisfactory, way of judging a composer of a definitely architectural type, but Mahler's work shows architectural intention without adequate accomplishment, and its essential weakness, careless selection of material, cannot be disguised. There is no other composer whose work can so little endure adaptation to the pianoforte, and it is better not to subject it to this test. In this medium,

the Third Symphony, a great revelation of nature, loses both brilliance and impressiveness, and sounds appallingly thin.

It is unjust to Mahler to represent him as a great architectural composer, exercising absolute control over his own thoughts; he is, rather, a most striking example of unresolved complexes. Regarded in this light we realise that his is a nature of intermingled greatness and littleness unparalleled in our time; but we cannot for that reason throw off his spell. By the passionate determination, the fiery earnestness with which he seeks a way to the hearts and minds of his fellows, he is, and will remain, a compelling force.

It is recognised that song is the germ of Mahler's work. It seems, indeed, his fate that song and symphony shall fight against each other, that memories of a song shall constantly intrude in his symphonic work, yet the best in his work, and in his life, was nevertheless built up on song. His tendency to make musical instruments "sing" arose from his love of the human voice, and even in composing a symphony he relied, according to his own confession, in some way or other, on words. Mahler's songs are rooted in nature and imagination; they are a way of escape for his restless stormy spirit back to peace and childhood. He finds his home in natural sounds and in the voices of mankind, particularly in the gentle melancholy of folk-song, which expressed for him the fate of his race, its heritage of oppression and pain. Thus it was that he found the underlying meaning of the *Lieder aus des Knaben Wunderhorn* (*The Youth's Wonder-horn*), which appealed to the Faust in him; he here achieved a marvellous, a unique, mating of nature with poetry, of music with words. Even here, the contradictions of his nature are apparent, for only when he worked on the smallest scale did he attain perfect coherence. Homesickness, restlessness, produce here wonder-

ful and dynamic effects; voices and orchestra work in closest collaboration. *Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen* (*Where the high-toned Trumpets Blow*) and *Revelge* are intensely moving; but in *Des Antonius Fischpredigt* (*St. Anthony Preaching to the Fishes*) is something grotesque and eerie; a shadow falls suddenly, and the laughter has a hollow ring.

In this last song originated the *Scherzo* of the Second—the C Minor Symphony — Mahler's finest, if not his most popular, work. Alternating moods, sorrow, clamour, dread, exhaustion, sweetness, the pathos which culminates in the *Resurrection Chorus*, are powerfully expressed orchestrally, through unprecedented gradations of *tempo* and intensity, through significant pauses, which give promise of the soaring effects of his Ninth Symphony. Nevertheless, Mahler's strength and weakness are at grips here, even more than elsewhere. The C Minor Symphony is characterised by grandeur of conception and a feebleness of execution, which even beauty of sound and strength of emotion cannot disguise; yet, after all the intricacies of a kind of broadly decorative Wagnerianism, we return again and again with delight to the song-begotten *Scherzo* with its irresistible eerie fancifulness.

As the notes of the idyllic Fourth Symphony die away, Death beckons, and the shades which hover about the souls of men give *Kindertotenlieder* to the world. One by one they come, leaving Rückart's words far behind, penetrating deep into the abyss of bitterness. The friendly aspects of nature and home vanish temporarily, to return once more in the remaining symphonies. Deprived of the help of words, Mahler wrestles more laboriously than ever with the form of his work. He had always tormented himself over the inversion and re-arrangement of the movements. Such restless, uncertain experiments are the natural result of lack of coherence in the elements on which the work is founded. The Fifth and Seventh Symphonies are contrapuntal in design; but here too the clash between

homophony and polyphony is something more than a technical problem, and Mahler could not solve it. It is the result of interwoven natural and metaphysical concepts in the composer who, on a sure foundation of song, built up a more elaborate but less stable musical superstructure.

In the Eighth Symphony, Mahler musters his imaginative powers afresh to express a comprehensive philosophy, a faith strong enough to conquer the inner contradictions of his nature. The symphony is written for a double four-part mixed chorus, a boys' choir and seven solo voices and orchestra, and suggests to us a blend of ancient and modern—Hrabanus Maurus [1] and Goethe, the *Veni Creator* and the closing scene in the second part of *Faust*. In spite of many beauties, the previous purely instrumental symphonies were orchestrally obscure through lack of complete adaptation of form to idea, but here words are introduced and dominate the work with excellent results, satisfying, apparently, some essential need in the composer. His technique acquires ease and sweep, mastering all contrapuntal problems, and successfully conveying the peculiar emotional quality, at once theatrical and sincere, which was natural to the man. In the *Accende lumen sensibus* is expressed awe in the presence of Omnipotence; in the *Gloria*, the blessedness of fulfilment and the ardour of the words is magnificently echoed by the music. In the second part, which has more numbers and is richer in shading—the chorus of anchorites and the trio for female voices are examples—the union of words and music is less natural, more forced.

This symphony was, in a sense, a triumph, but it was the work of a man who had suffered too much, who, having

[1] The authorship of the hymn *Veni creator spiritus* is generally attributed to the Archbishop of Mayence (778–856).

summoned every power for this effort, was exhausted, and knew it. The strain had at last broken his spirit and his heart. Thereafter his music has the pathos of a voice from the grave. *Das Lied von der Erde* is Mahler's most perfect work. It is a symphony—or rather a song-sequence with symphonic interludes—based on Hans Bethge's version of some Chinese lyrics, breathing the spirit of isolation, of weariness, of world-sorrow, of youth and beauty, long past and remembered dimly in dreams. Emotion is stilled; nature, home, beauty, are but echoes, and Mahler's utter sincerity stands out, flooding the dark places of the mind with autumnal light. The theme is blurred, but the music is luminously expressive. Something of folk-song, something of the third act of *Tristan*, something of Berlioz's *Scène aux champs* is there, coloured by the sorrows of a whole race; yet the work has its own strongly-marked individuality; it is such music as can spring only from a fine humanity. The instrumentation is extremely simple; laughter and lamentation are expressed by the wood-wind until near the end, when the oboe proclaims utter loneliness. Dusk falls over the landscape and over the spirit; the tenor voice has long since sunk into silence, and the last word is left to a contralto voice (or baritone). It is an unforgettable experience to hear in that *Ewig*, rendered by such a singer as Mme. Cahier, in that mysterious, almost supernatural landscape, interpreted by such a conductor as Bruno Walter, the farewell of a lonely spirit to a world in which it has dwelt as an alien. Rightly understood, this work is a true reconciliation between homophony and polyphony; it attains harmonic freedom and realises the aspirations of the modern spirit.

The *Lied von der Erde* is Mahler's real farewell to the world, although it was followed by a Ninth Symphony and he had sketched a tenth. The Ninth Symphony is apparently a

return to the world and to nature; it begins, as of old, with a march, but a suggestion of the uncanny is ever present, mingling with the country-dances, dominating the *rondo* and the *burlesque*. There is a long and wearisome *adagio*, in which any final close is avoided. The parts move harshly; but how far this was intentional it is impossible to say; Mahler himself did not consider this work final; but it cannot be doubted that, simple as he was, he was not unaware of the problems of modern music, nor of its possibilities as a means of expression. Mahler was a close friend of Arnold Schönberg.

Mahler is a curiosity among composers of the present epoch. He never wholly succeeded in expressing his ideas; his art turned, Janus-like, to both past and future; it was compounded of both great and petty qualities. As an ardent imitative composer, he admired and lived in other men's work, and could not escape from exterior influence when doing original work. Nor dared he forget it if he could; for the genius for detail which inspired him as conductor was the same which drove him to creative expression; it was the life of his orchestration, the means by which he made his melodies tell. His love of pure music militated against his metaphysical leanings. His work was derived from many sources, and his art was more varied than that of any contemporary; shining metal mingled with the dross. He was theatrical yet sincere, wrote programme-music without a programme, and his elaborate constructions were primitively inspired. For the most part, his work belongs to the older school of music, though after a fashion of its own; but his farewell, the *Lied von der Erde*, the perfect type of his song composition, conceived in the secrecy of chamber-music, is essentially, though not aggressively, modern.

The future fame of Mahler's less modern music is uncertain. It depends largely for its effect on interpretation by a conductor and orchestra possessed by the same instinctive

feeling which inspired its composition, and thus enabled to bring out its characteristic blend of vocal and instrumental music.

Mahler's intensity, his passionate gestures, appear to many a young conductor a tempting highway to popularity. It is a common experience to hear an echo of Mahler, as man and *kapellmeister*, from those, whether qualified or unqualified, who set out to interpret him. Moreover, Mahler has not been overlooked in the general scramble for pecuniary profits. Mistaken friends, who fail to distinguish between the man and the composer, and others who see him as a profitable speculation, have endangered his fame by indiscriminate praise.

As regards the more modern portion of his work, with its closely-interwoven vocal and instrumental music, its future appreciation is assured. Nevertheless, his life was greater than his work, which was for the most part baulked of fulfilment by imitativeness; the man himself retains our hearts.

CHAPTER IX

FROM BRAHMS TO REGER

We now pass to consider, in a cooler atmosphere, certain composers who by choice held aloof from the clamour and strife of the world.

Art of a theatrical nature is always sure of public success, the senses being ready to keep perpetual holiday and winning, as a rule with little difficulty, the consent of the intellect; but the North and Middle German is of a hard, non-sensuous nature, radically antagonistic to the glitter of the stage, and seeking artistic expression of a very different kind. Those who believe this non-sensuous quality to be the most valuable element in the German race, look to Brahms. They believe that if in the vaporous and sultry atmosphere which predominated in the "new" music of his day a man like Brahms could yet attain astonishing success, it is because he has contributed to music something fundamental and necessary. In his name, they too claim to be moderns.

Neither the old nor the new school of music disputes the lasting value of Bach; both, indeed, claim descent from him. Polyphony must be saved, though modern tone-colour has struck at its roots. In modern German, as opposed to other music, there is already a tendency to return to polyphony, which must surely result in a deeper and more intellectual development of the art.

The disciples of Brahms believe that they hold the key to this situation. Brahms re-discovered and re-established the ground-plan of music, and the middle-class and academic elements in Germanic and kindred races rallied to him. A non-theatrical composer feels the influence of Brahms just as surely

as a prospective opera-composer succumbs, at least temporarily, to Wagner. Brahms assimilated much of Bach and Beethoven; his creative gift, if forceful, was narrow; he had not their breadth of outlook; but only a powerful substitute for comprehensive originality could have brought about the amazing reaction against Wagner for which he was responsible. He wrote in a characteristic style; for example, his sixths and his basses are unmistakable. His followers have a yet narrower field of vision; nevertheless they possess ability and sincerity, virtues which, with a measure of truth, they sometimes deny to those of the opposite school.

The word "polyphony" has no standard significance; different people attach different ideas to it, and it is very generally misunderstood. The idea of "form" is subject to similar confusion; for those whose compositions are confined to chamber-music and the like, it signifies a mere pattern to be followed, a mould such as, for instance, the several movements of the sonata-form, into which content, or what passes for such, can be poured. In Germanic countries and elsewhere, this conception has resulted in poverty of invention, poorly compensated for by much assiduity. Anton Dvořák, a spontaneous elemental musician of Bohemian race, was patronised by Brahms whom he imitated, but (as was inevitable) only in the letter, not in the spirit. Giuseppe Martucci's connection with Brahms must be studied with due regard to the fact that polyphony had been forgotten in Italy for a century or more. The Hungarian, Ernst von Dohnányi, has achieved somewhat more under the Brahms influence, his versatility and executive virtuosity giving him a special capacity for assimilating form; but even he in all his work, operatic or otherwise, has produced only a few concert-pieces of value, such as his *Rhapsodies* for the pianoforte and a violin concerto. Neither Wilhelm Berger's refinement, nor that jovial Rhinelander Ewald Straesser's attempts to break through academic con-

ventions in symphony and chamber-music, display originality; nor do Otto Taubmann's German Masses, beautiful as they are in parts, help to solve the problem of modern choral music. The work of the prototype has been too powerful for these industrious and imitative followers.

In England, the Mendelssohnian tradition was peacefully carried on by Charles Villiers Stanford, till Edward Elgar appeared as the natural fruit of a cult of Brahms, which had for some time been gathering strength. The work of Elgar, the son of an organist, and at one time himself an organist, has an air of suavity and dignity. In his non-sensuous, sober use of the great musical forms, oratorio and symphony predominating, he is a true heir of Brahms; his *Dream of Gerontius*, *The Apostles*, and the *Enigma* orchestral variations, are worthy of their descent, and he holds a very high place in English public opinion. The influence of Brahms is very strong in Elgar's melodies; but in other respects, particularly in his manner of accentuation, he has learnt much from France, while his *Cockaigne* is full of the bustle and the idiom of London. A comparison of his typically symphonic violin concerto with a number of very mundane little concert-pieces from the same hand, will reveal striking vagaries of style.

In Latin countries, the national movement in music has exhausted itself, while Holland and England are ready for any new thing. The spirit underlying the forms of non-dramatic music needs renewal. Will this renewal come from Germany? It is clear that the time has come to put into practice that cult of Bach to which lip-service has been paid for a number of years. The idolisation of Brahms, a pensive reflection of Bach, exaggerated as it has been during the last two decades, is an important sign of the times.

At a period when hopes for the future were set principally

upon chamber-music, there arose a musician who, it is alleged, has translated Bach into contemporary idiom. He certainly possessed the conviction and driving force which trusts rather to empiricism than to academic tradition. Early in the new century, Max Reger won repute, and many hoped to find in him a counter-influence to the prevailing externalism in music.

The ease with which he composed in the supposedly outworn polyphonic style, producing work after work of intense interest, is nothing short of amazing. He appeared indeed to ignore the inhibitions which have hindered thought since the time of Beethoven, and to overshadow his contemporaries like an eighteenth-century giant, endowed with the qualities of the twentieth century, but it was not altogether so; for, having escaped the disabilities, he also missed much that was stimulating in nineteenth-century development.

Of Bavarian race, he grew up in a narrow circle, studied the organ and came early under the tuition of Hugo Riemann. Bach succeeded Beethoven as his guiding star. He lived and thought in a ring-fence of the polyphonic system, undisturbed by any attempt to express visual images in music or by the impressionistic or other influences of his day. He was a tireless worker, eagerly absorbing accessible music and nourishing his own talent thereby. As a fine craftsman, he revelled in his work; if his mastery of the polyphonic style was one-sided, it was a magnificent one-sidedness destined to make him a dominant influence. Reger's polyphony, in contradistinction to that of others of whom we have spoken, was consistent and continuous; it retained the logic of the horizontal line, sprang from legitimate canon, imitation and inversion, and was the basis of his construction. At times it is little more than skilful craftsmanship, but often the sheer genius of technique elicits significance as he proceeds.

Even Reger, however, is not entirely free from inhibitions. Notwithstanding the primitive strength of his nature, he was not untouched by modernity, and had not the absolute security which would justify his being called "a second Bach." Life did its hardest to shake and finally to cripple such spiritual assurance as he possessed. Even had the spirit of the age favoured a re-incarnation of Bach, a continuous linear polyphony would have been impossible. Reger was indeed quite unliterary, but hand and brain were susceptible to the mood of a culture otherwise alien to him. His theories affected his creative imagination. His principles of modulation encouraged his natural impatience to a bold swift development of his theme; but his horizontal work is not unaffected by the vertical tendency.

Reger's sense of tone was developed in the narrow medium of the organ. It never outgrew it, and was not sufficient for his mighty technique. His contrapuntal work was sometimes mystic, sometimes mere craftsmanship, and early showed a colour-range allied to that of Liszt, which, in spite of its derivation from a musical world so foreign to that of Reger, imparted a powerful impulse to his work. It is the chorale-fantasies and organ-fugues which, thanks to the interpretations of the organist Karl Straube, have brought him an individual reputation. In these works he was, it is true, an imitator; but how superb an imitator! He persuades the ponderous "king of instruments" to a lighter movement, without loss of dignity; he obtains more varied fingering, a more complex technique without replacing the grave spirit by the gay. Such mystic self-surrender to the letter of the creed is rare nowadays; but there is a theatrical over-emphasis on registration which detracts from the spiritual value of the work.

Reger's imitative imagination could take phrase after phrase from the work of another, and obtain the most brilliant or the most tender and dreamy organ effects, ranging through

many keys, while adhering to the tried form of the chorale. His *Fantasia and Fugue on B.A.C.H.* triumphantly concludes a series of works in the classical style, characterised by an assured mastery of polyphony, a unity of expression such as one would have thought impossible nowadays. Reger was a master of harmony and it was to his credit that he united the oldest and the newest musical devices without apparent incongruity. Nevertheless the spontaneity which characterises this work was not always accompanied by artistic good taste, the object of which is to selcet the artistically serviceable from a mass of possibilities. In Reger's work, confusing and fortuitous elements mingle with the intuitions and expressions of genius. There may even be seen the curious spectacle of this master of form at a loss, the continuity of his work broken, the structure faulty. Rhythmic atrophy is the penalty of the limitations of his nature. A doubt arises as to whether the primitive strength, which speeded his creative work, did not give place—shipwrecked on an oversensitive nervous temperament—to a merely feverish energy which resulted in a welter of hurrying phrases. Here is a tragedy which no amount of burlesque in the *scherzo* movements can cover. It is not surprising, if the case stands so, that Reger should constantly betray his secret devotion to the dreamy and mournful Brahms, but he inherited neither the straightforwardness which Brahms preserved through all rhythmical ramifications, nor the self-criticism which made him slow to publish a work. Reger remained a brilliant, but very unequal, composer.

Reger's works vary according as they are inspired by real or assumed emotion. An organist's lyrical dreaminess, rambling *adagio*, show him at his most original, but we seldom get these imaginative treasures unmixed. They rarely find adequate

formal expression and tend to be lost in the mechanism of his work; but where these difficulties are overcome, as in the *Chorale Fantasies*, where the music depends on a *canto fermo*, they can be most moving.

The lyrical quality in Reger's songs is very unequal. He was susceptible to the moods of a poem, but in a literary sense uncritical; he frequently chose poems unworthy of a musical setting. Naturally he was obsessed by Bach and the organ; but he was strongly influenced by Hugo Wolf, to whose memory he dedicated an arrangement of the *Italian Serenade* and a pianoforte arrangement of the *Penthesilea* overture. He felt that as a singer of songs, he owed a duty to his period, and that as a master of modulation, he should be able to interpret the words of the poets. Here, again, he was marvellously adaptable, his technical skill sufficing for every type of song. He succeeded in expressing modern sensibility while adhering to old methods, and he imitated Bach's *melos*. The *leitmotiv*, or a correspondingly expressive pianoforte accompaniment, are exemplified in his song compositions. Many of the great masters, Brahms, Hugo Wolf, Wagner, were his models in turn. Some of his songs are of the "pretty-pretty" type, while in *Schlichten Weisen* (*Plain Melodies*) some are so plain as to be practically featureless; others, so complicated in texture as to be unsingable. The *tempo* of these songs is Schubertian, but there the resemblance ends; for, genuine as was the emotion which produced them, this class of Reger's work lacks personality.

When we come to the consideration of his chamber-music we find startling contrasts such as that between the solo-sonatas and *Chaconne* for violins, and the C major Sonata for violin and piano (Op. 72). The former is an accomplished imitation of Bach, preserving the polyphonic style through thick and thin; the latter, a piece of untamed wilderness in a barb-wire fence. The critic's task is not easy in this den

of unchained passions. The work is an unprecedented mixture of elements, a stimulating attempt on the part of a modern composer whose undoubted capacity was hampered by a divided will. This sense of frustration, of an embarrassed tone-sense uncertain of its direction, is frequent in Reger; yet he grasped the essence of chamber-music and produced much work in which the inward flaw is barely perceptible.

In his use of the orchestra, Reger was too much the organist. We will pass over a *Sinfonietta* which is a mere jumble of sound; but at no time was his imagination really at home with the orchestra, nor did he succeed in producing original work in this medium. Though he mastered it on the intellectual and technical side, a certain stiffness cannot be disguised. He wrote a *Serenade* in which simple emotion finds timid expression in the delicately-shaded tone-values of string instruments. Nevertheless he speedily attained a degree of ease, and his *Variations on a Merry Theme* (Op. 100), his *Symphonic Prologue to a Tragedy*, and his *Comedy Overture*, though less interesting than earlier works, show how rapidly Reger accustomed himself to the orchestra.

Meanwhile, as musical director at Meiningen, he came into close touch with the fully-equipped orchestra, and practically the whole music of the period streamed through ear and brain. Though not a born conductor, he threw himself into the task with a passionate musicianship which lifted his performance above mediocrity, but he still retained something of the *kapellmeister*. In his later orchestral works there is an echo of the dancing style of Richard Strauss, and even a suggestion of Debussy's whole-tone scale effects. He mastered orchestration, but it is as an inspired translation of the organ into terms of the orchestra that his *Böcklin Suite* is worthy of a place in the concert repertoire.

The tale of Reger's works reached Op. 146, and there were actually many more. The finest are undoubtedly his

Variations. When Reger dealt with a theme of his own, rhythmic weakness and restless modulation frequently spoilt its outline; but in Variations, the borrowed thought gave a firm anchorage, fluctuation was not merely allowable but necessary, and he was able to give free rein to his imagination, resting upon the support of Bach, Hiller, Mozart or Beethoven. His object was not to preserve a recognisable theme through all possible changes of form, but rather to weave original creative work about thematic fragments, clothing them in a riotous growth of his own fancies, laughter, mockery, dreams, so that they are often barely discernible. His variations on Bach, Beethoven, Hiller and Telemann, are a rich legacy. They are reminiscent of Brahms; they are from time to time rhythmically weak, yet their very digressions are precious and, after all kinds of thematic adventures, the final fugue comes off with brilliant effect, even when it is itself too conventional.

The gleanings of Reger's work are copious. His setting of the *Hundredth Psalm* for mixed choir, orchestra and organ (Op. 106), in which trumpets and trombones are combined with other instruments to make the double fugue a shout of joy, is good and impressive, though it cannot rank with the greatest work of that class. Beside this Protestant confession of faith is the Catholic *Die Nonnen*, a choral work in which the mysticism associated with that faith finds intense expression.

Reger's pianoforte compositions were not confined to variations and fugues; he also produced lesser works in a very curious style. His pianoforte concerto, however, like his violin concerto, is not grateful to the player. Both these works are too orchestral; the solo parts are not happily conceived and the general effect is crude.

Reger died early. His fate as a composer has been remarkable. For a short time he was considered "modern"; then

succeeded a period of neglect by all but a faithful few, and to-day no publisher can find a market for him. Regarded dispassionately, this is an injustice. His work does not deserve neglect, though it needs careful selection. Some of his later chamber-music compositions are illuminating and are characterised by his best inspirations.

One could not class Reger as a sage; if any man ever did, Reger carried to his grave mysterious secrets of the relationship between art and personality. His sudden death is as significant as his life and work. Strength, charm and morbidity intermingled made and unmade the structure of his art; from the same soil sprang both mastery and weakness of form, while obscure impulses urged him to rapid and various output.

Reger was a seeker, a creator of transition values; he desired to reconcile his own personality with the practical means of sound; by virtue of these qualities he was a modern; indeed he outdoes the moderns in temperamental disunion. He exemplifies in a unique way the junction of two centuries. He should be honoured as a far-seeing master of harmony, a bold renovator of the organ; his work is stimulating, though not in itself great art.

This conclusion is borne out by his effect on his pupils; they do not imitate but improve upon him. Among them, Joseph Haas, a South German, is a sound musician. The lucid and polished phrases of his chamber-music compositions display good workmanship. Another follower, Hermann Unger, has been otherwise influenced as a man of culture by colouristic ideas quite foreign to Reger, and is on the way towards forming a style of his own. Paul Juon, a Russian, has grafted both Brahms and Reger upon the stock of his native art and produces hybrid work.

The Brahms–Reger line is ended, but the problem of a new polyphony is being tackled elsewhere.

CHAPTER X

RICHARD STRAUSS

THE temperamental contradictions which hampered Reger's music did not trouble Strauss. As we turn to him, the cloud of tragedy which hangs over all his contemporaries seems to be dissipated by the sunshine of a creative artist's joy in his work; but as we study the tendencies which he originated and the epoch which he initiated, we perceive a darkness on the horizon, the precursor of storms to come.

The fame of Richard Strauss is world-wide. Since the time of Wagner he has been the strongest factor in German music, a test of its quality; but he is also an instance of the modern materialism which translates the value of a work of art into terms of money. Here we may see the greatness and the limitations of his art, but in calling him a child of the times, it must not be forgotten that he was also a dominant force of the times, which would have been impossible without his real artistic value. Nevertheless it is probable that the spirit of the period and Strauss's own tendency to make the best of both worlds, prevented him from realising his best possibilities.

It is noteworthy that the composer who was to do so much towards directing the future course of German music, was (in opposition to the youth of his period) at no time a Wagnerian, but spent his musical childhood under the domination of Mendelssohn, Schumann and Brahms. Although apparently behind, he was actually in advance of his time, and took Wagner in his stride, as a passing experience. He seemed destined for so-called "pure music," but with his natural bent to externals, he absorbed the influences of his period and

developed powers which he may not have consciously suspected. Instead of remaining a musician of the classical-romantic school, carefully composing work after work in accordance with the academic tradition, he became a writer of "programme-music" and of operas entirely detached, to all appearances, from his former self. Fate brought him into touch with Alexander Ritter, who converted him to Berlioz, Liszt and Wagner; but apart from this incident he must sooner or later have left chamber-music for the opposite camp, namely the orchestra, which revealed him to himself, stimulating the young *kapellmeister's* imagination and awaking him to fresh possibilities. His innate love of objectivity grasped the possibility of artistic realisation in this medium.

This sudden *volte face* towards "Young Germany" caused a drastic change in Strauss's work. Hitherto he had worshipped "black and white," had given to his thoughts the firm outline of the sonata-form; now he came under the spell of colour, the spirit of that symphonic composition which from moment to moment adapts form to content. Could the union of these two leading ideas be achieved without revealing ragged ends? Would the new convert find obstacles in the path he had chosen? On the contrary, he was benefited by it. His previous freedom from Wagnerianism had given him a place of his own among contemporary composers. Strauss had been neither dominated nor crippled by the dogma of *chromatics* and *leitmotiv*, and on that very account soared above Wagner's disciples. The conventional speech and long-drawn melodies of *Tristan* had obsessed the latter and involved them in contradictions. For Strauss, *Tristan* had been an experience which stirred him to the depths of his soul, but did not uproot his architectonic sense. The new influences, coming thick upon him, increased his power of expression without changing his soul.

This soul was middle-class and wholesome, opposed to the

subtle charm of the new music, and the result was that his work remained safely anchored to the triad, to the basic principles of tonality. Essentially he retained a perfect simplicity which had its source in Mozart, was nourished and developed during his musical adolescence on romanticism, stood out plainly in his earlier works, and at last, after many adventures, turned the composer's eyes to Mozart once more.

Strauss had no literary bias, none of that desire to theorise which so deeply affected Wagner's work; but on the other hand he had an open mind, sensitive to the stimuli of the new epoch. Lack of literary culture did, however, lead Strauss into errors of taste at times in his choice of libretto.

There is irony in the fact that the man who was long considered the leader of the new movement in music differs very widely in essence from those who claim to be "moderns." His middle-class healthy-mindedness was strongly opposed to that class of Bohemian literary musicians who appear to people the world at present. He knew, indeed, nothing of sensuous ecstasy, nothing of Wagner's sultry eroticism, the result of too acute an impressionability; and sexual passion has naught to do with his work. Woman for him meant the mother of his children, the wife who lovingly shielded his daily life from troubles and his artistic work from distractions. Neither his senses nor his nerves were subject to storms. This was at once a strength and a limitation. It made for certainty of hand and for solid foundations and provided against carelessness and over-hastiness. However audacious his plan, it never remained in a merely experimental state, but was carefully and logically worked out. The limitation showed itself in a certain *bourgeois* sentimentality, a *naïf* egotism.

Max Reger

Richard Strauss

These were indeed the weaknesses of the master's work; where the lyric is genuinely felt, it has a pronounced sentimental and provincial flavour. For example, in *Ein Heldenleben*, the composer's egotism clearly identifies himself with the hero; the result is that the hero (in the violin solo) pays court to his lady after the manner of a small tradesman. The *Sinfonia Domestica* expresses this attitude yet more clearly; here domesticity and the child hold the stage, and such motives as the ascending sevenths show the composer's mind only too obviously. Domestic poetry should acclaim him as its prophet.

Despite such limitations, Strauss had sufficient force of personality to produce invaluable work. He had enough vitality and zest to overleap his limitations and become artistically creative. Even in his boyish pianoforte pieces, gavottes and *scherzi*, the spirit which was to beget *Till Eulenspiegel* was recognisable. The leaping themes and originality of rhythm are outstanding, but something more was needed to make the spirit working here on a narrow scale, powerful enough to produce great works of art.

The period during which Strauss studied Wagner and Liszt, and acquainted himself with the orchestra and its effects, was a critical one for him; for it was then that he became aware of his own latent possibilities. Hitherto he had not produced original work in a true sense, neither his capacity for handling the *adagio*—which alone can put heart into great work other than operatic—nor his inventive genius being sufficient to give personality to his compositions. But the orchestra kindled his imagination; his instinct for polyphony, which had been starved in chamber-music, was satisfied by this new experience; his masses of sound took form and he revelled in the externals which he loved. In his youthful compositions the *scherzo* theme had indicated his true bent, now he was able to give its latent possibilities full

expression in the unexampled freakish gambolling of the wood-wind. At the same time his sentimentality, so naked in the realm of pure music, was here clothed, and gained a factitious value.

Although Strauss's secession from one musical camp to the other appeared to split his artistic career in two, the break was not so complete as it seemed. He always retained certain tricks of expression. An uncommon adroitness in the handling of forms which he had acquired in his classic-romantic period was manifest in his new venture, and was indeed more useful than ever in the handling of the compositions which sprang from his new connection with programme-music. Polyphony and instinct for tone enriched each other; the Strauss who had worked in the sonata-form, guided the Strauss who now seized upon the orchestra as a means of realising externals, with the excellent result that the composer avoided the temptation to get a hasty effect and remained faithful to his plan. He thereby escaped the disruption which is so often the fate of a symphonic poem.

The great superiority of Richard Strauss over contemporary German composers was made clear in his ensuing works. It was a superiority of both mind and form. He produced amazing scores, "programme" and pure music in one, exemplifying a new and enchanting rhythm, rich variety and a fresh and ingenious mixture of elements. An attempt has been made to refer his work to the sonata-form. This is certainly possible and at times (say in *Till Eulenspiegel*) Strauss emphasises the "rondo" form; but its incompatibility with his objective tendency inevitably becomes prominent. The young master's unspoilt perceptive faculty and irrepressible high spirits could not co-exist with formal prolixity, they tended rather to abridge and intensify the traditional form. He employed his technical skill to express in the most spirited manner the feelings with which he was inspired. There are

traces of Liszt's influence in certain basic principles of these symphonic poems; but at each new step, Strauss proved that he was apart from the tribe begotten by this spiritual father, in race, predisposition and culture. Following his own bent he worked out different conclusions from similar openings. Liszt, sensitive and cosmopolitan, restlessly searching for novelty, created brilliant, mistrustful superficialities, while Strauss's work is consciously strong in itself. The one, obsessed by colour, developed all his motives on harmonic lines; the other, trained in the classical school, worked within the polyphonic frame, a polyphony, indeed, which in the last resort always allots to the tone-sense which set it in motion the decisive power over the phrase. His work has not the inflexible logic of Reger's polyphony, for though the main outlines are strong, the details are subject to modification. The music is dramatically inspired, but is constrained by an unerring sense of form; and these ever-warring tendencies strike sparks. Imaginative use of sound is intensified by the dramatic instinct, and at this stage helps to determine the choice of theme. The scoring suggests the picture of a busy ant-heap; but nevertheless the central movement is in the control of an unerring musician who blends visual and auditory images into a satisfactory whole. It is evident that from time to time objectivity and form, imagination and the sense of musical convention, jostle and one or the other has to give way But, in the main, simplicity prevails, and melody, harmony and rhythm re-establish the sway of tradition. The rhythm is typical of the man, joyous, roguish, delighting in surprises; and however irregular, syncopated and complex it may appear, it is at bottom vertebrate and methodical. His harmony wanders far in the course of developing the motive, but it never forsakes the basis of tonality. Certain roughnesses, caused by bold progressions, chromatic "alterations" and modulations, are disguised by instrumental tone-colour, while plentiful use of

the horns and arpeggios for the harp gives grace to the cadence and achieve reconciling closes.

We must return to the consideration of the originating idea in Strauss's work. Its outstanding characteristic is simplicity. Again and again, one is struck by the contrast between thematic simplicity and a highly elaborate score. His technical genius was quick to seize on material, to supplement visual with auditory impressions and *vice versa*; impressions prolific and strikingly unlike the slow and circumspect style of the period. Strauss, like Reger, was not hampered by temperamental inhibitions, and in addition his acute and dominating intellect, his superior understanding of his art, enabled him to score his musical fancies with absolute certainty. Despite a capacity for brilliant combination, his technique remains simple and emphasises the innocence and originality of his underlying conception.

He would have been the last to underrate the importance of a definite concept in a musical composition, and was indeed a strenuous opponent of the predominance of colour. His own conceptions prove him a child of this world; they are non-metaphysical and show none of that spirit which made Beethoven hammer at a theme till it was full of his own insight and individuality. Neither had he any feeling that the elements of music had grown stale; he cherished a firm belief that his originality would be sufficiently displayed by his imaginative scoring and that any great care expended on the theme was lost labour, useless because it was against the whole nature of his art to turn an idea over till he could view the ordinary from some unusual angle, useless also because, as a rule, his concept and his technique are one. His sense of tonality was very varied, and as much an expression of the modern spirit as his technique.

As has been said, his themes were drawn from many sources. Some were reminiscent of his classic-romantic period; thus Mendelssohn, decried by Wagner, was honourably reinstated by Strauss. His experiences as *kapellmeister* left on him indelible traces. He was too loyal to look down even on Lortzing, and he felt Wagner's influence, although *Tristan* did not carry him off his feet. Pathos and anything overheated in art were foreign to his nature, nor was he naturally imitative; but Wagner, nevertheless, did much to smooth his path. Himself untouched by eroticism, he felt the spell of the master who had revealed the uses of erotic lyricism in music. The intimate union of vocal and instrumental expression in the *Meistersinger*, the poetry of the *Siegfried Idyll*, charmed him, and an echo of Wagnerian orchestration and lyrical element is to be heard from *Don Juan* to *Rosenkavalier* and *Ariadne*. Even, however, where he is nearest Wagner, in his treatment of dramatic sequence and climax, his work is his own; his was too bold and original a spirit to be merely an echo.

By virtue of their cleverness, liveliness and sparkling wit, his themes clearly express the composer's individuality. They are reminiscent of Berlioz, though in modern *tempo* and transmuted by a different temperament. Chuckles, laughter and mockery are rendered in a manner peculiar to Strauss, the triumphant expression of something which had been hitherto timidly attempted in the *scherzo* of chamber-music. The early *Burlesque* for pianoforte and orchestra pays homage to Mendelssohn and Brahms and at the same time pokes fun at them, even the wood-wind participating in the jest. It reminds one immediately of the variations of the *Eulenspiegel* motive, now compressed, now stated at length, in a flexible rhythm, of the "Widersacher" in *Ein Heldenleben*, a patent caricature of Wagner's "Beckmesserton," and again of the hundred-and-one saucy pranks which flit through the

orchestration, mere incidental motives as they are, of *Don Quixote*.

With the like high spirits which inspired his *motifs*, Strauss introduced the street song into his compositions. In the D flat major polka, a description of one of Till Eulenspiegel's mad pranks, we can almost see him making a long nose at propriety, but it is only an excerpt, a musical quotation, strong enough for the moment to seem to contradict the main symphonic idea, but soon to be engulfed in the whirlpool of the score and cast up in another form.

The instinct for effect, however, remains constant; it is there even when sincerity of feeling would appear to render it superfluous. Strauss has no reserve; every song is an open avowal. This was an inheritance from Liszt, but it is a tendency in any composer who unites song and orchestra and aspires to orchestral song. Strauss talked little and seldom about his music, but his music babbled all his secrets.

His songs—which secured his immediate popularity—were only a secondary activity, but they are none the less illuminating on that account. They reveal the composer's development and map the divagations of his course. They are not particularly striking, suggesting for the most part a blend of Brahms, Jensen, Franz and Hugo Wolf, and are sometimes sickly sweet. Strauss could sink to the depths in such a song as *Ständchen*, but *Morgen* is good original work. He was allured by the lyrical poetry of his period, the work of such as Mackay, Dehmel, Liliencron, Henckell and Bierbaum. His pianoforte accompaniments have the symphonic touch and are characteristically awkward to play. Just as he spent small trouble on the basic concepts for his compositions, he did not, when writing a song, make a serious attempt to pierce to the heart of the writer's meaning and suit music to

words. The poem affords merely a vague stimulus, instrumental feeling brings out the verse motive, certain progressions and harmonies are repeated, and the instinct for effect produces the excitement of such candid work as *Heimliche Aufforderung*. *Salome* was inspired by the revolutionary spirit, while *Der Steinklopfer* and the *Arbeitsmann* are socialistic. In these works the very heart of the orchestra beats in sympathy with the social convulsions of the time and the "light and shade" of the new lyricism is faithfully expressed; with the increasing importance of concert life, the more necessary is it for the orchestra to catch the inflection even of simple song, but in the process the gifted but *bourgeois* composer has somewhat lost his revolutionary ardour. When *Salome* and *Electra* had been followed by the *Rosenkavalier*, *Ariadne* and *The Woman without a Shadow*, he took up ideas which the composer of *Salome* would have rejected and worked them up like an artist and a craftsman. In his riper years he encourages frequent revivals of his early works, even with indifferent singers, for they have brought him his success and they still keep it going. He is not very prudent in the choice either of orchestras to carry out his work or of *protégés*. These are pardonable blemishes in a creative artist who has lived in a time particularly given to shams.

In his song composition Strauss wavered from simplicity to elaboration. Simplicity was natural to him. Where he writes of public matters or attempts folk-song, the emotion is not perfectly genuine; for it is affected by the artist's feeling of superiority. His love of externals, of sheer movement, his natural *tempo*, brought him in touch with modern poetry. His accompaniment, whether a pianoforte sketch or fully orchestrated, is seldom quite compatible with a type of song which ranges through all stages between banality and singularity, but which is rarely a convincing piece of self-expression.

In the nineteenth century the orchestra became a dominant force in music and it had a directing and limiting effect on Strauss's imagination; limiting, because much of the energy which might have gone to creative imagination was diverted to serve purely orchestral ends. With an increase in the number of instruments the effort to obtain exactitude of expression, in spite of, or even by means of, the increasing element of chance in sound-combinations, led to dissipation of creative energy, or, rather, to its barter for wealth of musical material. The imaginative musician, finding in this way an immediate and present satisfaction of his instincts and desires, is in danger of forgetting the true sources of music. Strauss, furthermore, was harassed by a subconscious attempt to reconcile his own opposing tendencies towards instrumental and vocal composition.

Healthy energy, and the *tempo* of modern life, led Strauss to curtail and condense his score, with the result that the classical ground-plan is frequently difficult to trace, while representational and graphic elements, arising out of his love of externals, are stated so briefly that the main result is impressionistic. He had begun as a devotee of pure drawing, taking each separate note as sacred, but the more he gave his attention to the writing of orchestral scores the more he sought condensation, tending to develop his themes simultaneously rather than to elaborate them successively. His work reveals flashes of imaginative and technical genius. Wagner had already indicated similar impressionistic possibilities, but they were actually realised by the more simple Strauss, often, indeed, to the detriment of clarity. In the Battle Scene in *Ein Heldenleben*, for instance, it is quite impossible to unravel the interwoven parts. In *Salome*, such condensations are carried to extremes, and mark a critical stage in Strauss's artistic career. There could indeed be no greater contrast than that between the clarity of the human

voice and the impressionistic obscurity of the orchestra; it is at the same time the contrast between sensuousness and intellectuality. But even in *Salome* Strauss's natural and spontaneous musicianship exercises a moderating influence. There is nothing obscure in Jochanaan's insipid reiterated lyricism, nor in Salome's death-songs. Here his tendency towards clear outlines as a symphonic composer clashes with his impressionism, and there is manifested an excess of imitative music and over-emphasis on externals, as for instance in the Jews' quintet and the death of Jochanaan. *Salome* is the most striking example in his work of extreme archaism in conflict with extreme modernity. It must be added, however, that the orchestral obscurity, controlled and organic as it is in essentials, conveys the *Salome* atmosphere most successfully, and the apparently atonal effects against a background of varying tonality are a wonderful achievement, unique, indeed, in modern music.

The struggle for dramatic expression is the root cause of confusion. It is fascinating to observe the combination of orchestration with melody, of instrumental with vocal music, of symphony with drama, taking shape under Strauss's hands. Clarity, after the manner of Mozart, is the goal which he sets out to attain. He was very unlike Mahler, whose inborn love of the human voice led him to give melody a prominent position. Mahler took his stand on nature; Strauss on civilisation. The former was drawn to the drama by metaphysical tendencies in the symphony; the latter by delight in physical things. How far was Strauss a dramatist? It is clear that dramatic ideas underlie his symphonic poems and the capacity for evoking vivid orchestral pictures is more highly developed in him than in any living composer; but, although the epic traits in his work are few, they are clearly recognisable, while his brilliant and sensitive musical feeling for symphonic work, and a symphonically derived technique,

are definitely non-dramatic. The *leitmotiv*, indeed, presented no difficulty to him; on the contrary he gave it hitherto unknown freedom and ease of movement.

The fundamental problem is that of the human voice. To make it stand out clearly from the orchestra involves not merely that its own lyric line must be made firmer and cleaner, but that the orchestra too must be cleansed of all obscurities, that it must return to classical limpidity—yet without returning to commonplace and platitude. How far this can be achieved even by a Richard Strauss depends on his own personality and on his temporal environment.

The inner process of evolution from composer to dramatist lasted till the year 1900, and during this time Strauss produced the three-act *Guntram* (a tribute to Wagner and to *Parsifal*), which was frankly a failure. In this solitary instance Strauss is influenced and hampered, like any other disciple of Wagner, by Wagnerian emotionalism.

Strauss felt his way towards the drama through a decade of symphonic composition, a medium which just fell short of giving adequate expression to his individuality. A dramatic element, slowly developing in symphonic form, indicated his trend to the stage, and when his work at length became definitely dramatic it in turn mirrored the symphony. In the operas, particularly in the later works, are tangles which need to be resolved.

The symphonic fantasy, *Aus Italien*, is an interesting attempt to construct a true symphony out of graphic and emotional music, while *Don Juan*, *Tod und Verklärung* and *Till Eulenspiegel*, though unquestionably masterpieces, are full-grown pledges of this *mésalliance*. Melody holds to past traditions and preserves its independence in face of entirely modern orchestration. The knightly theme for the horns in

Don Juan, the C major Redemption theme in *Tod und Verklärung* which, starting from a pedal note, attains wonderful richness of tone, and the narrative *rondo motif* in *Till Eulenspiegel*, are all perfectly in accord with the orchestra whence they appear to originate, and the composer works out their several developments without overcalling his hand. Amongst these, if one is better than another, the palm should go to *Till Eulenspiegel*, which far excels the work of the period in non-lyrical power, in intellectual combination, and in sustained *tempo*.

In *Macbeth* and *Zarathustra*, the inspiration is very unequal. At this stage the capacity of the orchestra to express externals and atmosphere had almost become autocratic. *Ein Heldenleben* is repressed drama, vitalised by joyous egotism. In no other symphonic work of Strauss is there a contrast so strongly marked between organised "noise," expressed with the full strength of wind and percussion instruments, and gentle lyricism. Substitute a voice for the solo violin and you have opera in cross-section. This experiment was heralded by *Don Quixote*, in which the fantastic variations upon the Don Quixote and Sancho Panza themes catch the exact intonation of a flock of bleating sheep. In a kind of impressionistic mist, rhythmic and harmonic thrills and agitations arouse a sense of adventure. Fine gradations of colour are here suggested with a technical ingenuity which gives promise of the coming *Salome*.

Strauss had read and rejected many operatic *libretti*. The time had come to break away from Wagnerian operatic material, and his evolution was for some time in this direction. His very different *tempo* introduced new elements in symphonic development and the way was clear for the one-act opera.

Feuersnot is his first opera in the new manner, a good-tempered joke against the Philistine, its composer little

guessing how nearly related he was to the tribe. His connection with Ernst von Wolzogen, who divided his attentions between literature and the literary cabaret, led him to emphasise all that could annoy the Philistine, especially the Munich Philistine. In this opera Strauss finds himself, and sets up a type of operatic art that rivals Wagner. Emotionalism is cut out and primitive eroticism is defended with the cheerful impudence of a guttersnipe. Complete emancipation from the symphonic poem is not, indeed, attained. Many of the tricks and pranks of *Eulenspiegel* are there, but the symphonic manner hinders the stage effectiveness of the opera, already overloaded by Wolzogen's *libretto*.

Nevertheless this is a work of genius. Eroticism may have been the enkindling force, yet in result it is no more than a mischievous grab at the forbidden fruit which the composer had by nature no real wish to pluck.

It brings us a step nearer to the discussion of the much-disputed *Salome*.

Strauss was not attracted to Oscar Wilde's *Salome* by its eroticism, but was fascinated by the problem of expressing erotic perversity in terms of an orchestra which, through practice in the symphonic form, he had brought to a wonderful degree of perfection as an impressionist medium. The rapid *tempo* of his orchestra suited the characteristic rush of the *Salome* text, while he discovered and gave prominence to an ethical tendency in the marble coldness of the words. Although the acute accentuation makes great demands on the voice parts, they are helped by the genuine lyricism. The orchestral interludes, as previous developments would have led one to expect, are packed with meaning; the one following the exit of Jochanaan is a good example.

The ethical leanings of Strauss's work had already become noticeable in the *Sinfonia Domestica*, which at the same

time showed continuity with tradition more clearly than the symphonic work of the middle period, complicated as these were by condensation, abbreviations and contractions. Union with the drama would seem to have given Strauss greater freedom in his symphonic work.

The unity is perhaps more apparent than real; but the course of the sonata or symphony, despite the masterly introduction of episodes, is clearly foretold from the "exposition," from the first appearance of the theme, and is never afterwards in doubt. It persists even in the double fugue, though the strain is here perceptible and the composer has frequently to pause for breath. All the forces of modernity and virtuosity are, however, insufficient to destroy the basis of tonality.

Two facts clearly emerge: the purer the symphonic movement and the nearer it approaches to the classical, the clearer becomes the antithesis between the theme and the treatment of the theme. The artist employs talent, wisdom, and acquired skill upon material all too simple and slight. Moreover, the ethical tendency in Strauss caused him to dedicate a work to his wife and baby, at the very moment when his genius had ostensibly taken an erotic and sensational turn.

After *Salome*, he collaborated with Hugo von Hoffmannsthal —a momentous connection brought about by his quest for suitable *libretti*, and a proof of his doubtful literary judgment. Hoffmannsthal cannot be called an original or creative poet, but he has a highly-developed appreciation of bygone culture, a marvellous skill in expressing its flavour in polished phrases; and in accent and turn of words he seemed to show some affinity with Strauss's music. What differences and literary difficulties there were could be overlooked, or covered by the composer's musical power.

Strauss was attracted by the picturesqueness of the *Electra*, the contrast between degeneracy, hatred and rottenness on the one hand, and the maiden Chrysothemis' wholesome maternal instinct—a variation on the *Domestica* theme—on the other. The mists of *Salome* are dispelled; the orchestra rings with discordant, animal cries, tortured and torturing, expressing the spirit of Clytemnestra, conflicting with the holiness represented by Electra's magnificent monologue and increasing to a climax of terrific power. The return of Orestes is harrowing. But all these horrors bring about only an apparent disregard of every musical tradition. The normality of Chrysothemis settles down to E-flat major, the *bourgeois* loves of Electra and Orestes in A-flat major. There is finally an impulse towards even a dithyrambic C major; but it is, however, not quite fully worked out.

The ultimate worth of the *Electra* score lies in the masterly technique whereby contrasting elements in the story are united in an artistic whole, but it is, nevertheless, a throwback. The singers have no part in this synthesis of opposites, they are constrained by *libretto* and orchestration to utter cries which are often very far from being song. To make the voice the chief expression of spiritualised emotion would be a triumph indeed; Strauss, though by nature inclined to Mozart, did not achieve it. He found the solution which he sought in that somewhat badly-chosen melody, of which we have spoken, instead of in a purified modernity of mind. His choice of melody remained an unorganised residuum in his otherwise highly-organised work. The period in which he lived and the limitations of his own nature prevented him from obtaining the noble type of melody which his music needed; but he was too *naïf* to realise this. He did, however, achieve a marvellous clarification of the orchestra, making room for the possibilities of the human voice, and at this stage his opera became for the first time truly operatic. The *tempo*

became more moderate, and the one-act piece gave place logically to the three-act.

The work of this period appeals to the general public more than that of his earlier days, and this appeal would have been stronger if Hoffmannsthal's literary flavour had not to some extent come between the composer and his audience. Those who study modern music perceive that the result is a compromise, interesting as a revelation of personality, but more a skilful evasion than a solution of the problems of modern art.

The *Rosenkavalier* was an undisputed success. It "comes off," despite the numerous episodes which confuse its dramatic development. It was natural that Strauss should succeed in episodic work, for he had proved his pre-eminence in the management of complicated externals. The interest of the work lies in its blend of Mozart and the *Meistersinger*, and, last but not least, with music of the Viennese waltz type. These elements, together with its own peculiar atmosphere, made it a popular success. The waltz which persists through the score is harmonically distorted and coloured in the modern fashion—a piece of not perfectly convincing craftsmanship—but from the first note the *tempo* of the modulation in E-flat major, the domination of the sound by the rhythm, are genuine Strauss. For the rest the artistry, by means of which the primitive is transfigured and becomes original, is admirable. There are traces here of something which later became obvious in the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*—the extreme simplicity of the sketch which no amount of subsequently introduced padding can altogether disguise.

Free from eroticism as he was, Strauss aimed at adorning both speech and music of his musical comedy with delicacy of erotic shades; but the gross-mindedness of Ochs von Lerchenau, who would have liked to make havoc of the score, found no expression. The First Act closes on the fading charms and love-renunciation of a middle-aged woman; only the

lightest hand, the most sensitive ear, could have created this peculiar and touching blend of the *Siegfried Idyll* with Viennese music. It is a spiritualisation of the sensuous, but it is stylistically reminiscent. Not until amorous adventure is over and passion appears as a prelude to married love—at the incident of the presentation of the silver rose—do we find the personal note, expressing purity and sincerity. The exquisitely orchestrated F-sharp major passage is heartfelt. Afterwards Wagner's influence becomes excessive, the figure of Eva is once more conjured up, and the playful masquerade of the Third Act, introduced by a highly original *fugato*, cannot cover an echo of the *Meistersinger*. True love is victorious, but it is Strauss's rhythm, as the little nigger enters, which saves the comedy.

Ariadne in Naxos is a pure love-lyric, and Strauss put more of his heart into it than into any other work. He gives exceptional freedom to the singers, making them the chief exponents of his lyricism; but the conversation between Ariadne and Bacchus is impersonal, half-veiled in the beauty of the music, and the rest is no more than prelude and interlude. Hoffmannsthal's idea of mingling lyricism and burlesque had charms for Strauss, even at this advanced stage of his development. There are gems of *coloratura* in Zerbinetta's *aria*—a brilliant piece of work in the *Eulenspiegel* manner—which, as rendered by Maria Ivogün, for instance, is absolute perfection. Elsewhere the spirit of buffoonery is restrained by considerations of the practical problems of the singer. The lyricism, too, is stylised, the simple theme reminding one of past romanticism, overlaid with harmonic filigree work.

The *libretto*, ineffective in all its changes of mood, prevented *Ariadne* from being a striking success; but the music is none the less very fine, particularly in the clever and tuneful suite (which at one time introduced *Ariadne* and is now replaced by the equally good prologue in modern recitative manner), and in the orchestration, which is wisely confined to the limits of

chamber-music. Though not unaffected by intervening experience, it yet reaches back to Strauss's beginnings.

We come to the *Alpine Symphony*. Such a series of sound-pictures, framed in three octaves of B-flat minor—a veritable transmutation of light into sound—could only originate from Strauss's workshop. The strings do battle with the twenty horns, the frozen summits are pictured in the high D of the trumpets, the waterfall in a chain of *glissandos*, the storm, reminiscent of *Salome*, roars with the full orchestra and organ —here is a riot of "programme" music which has seldom been surpassed. The melodic treatment is sweet in the extreme, so romantically sweet as to be almost *bourgeois*.

The *Alpine Symphony* is marked by crystal clarity and sharpness of detail, obtained from the simplest devices; but this very simplicity is apt to threaten its form as a whole. The *Legend of Joseph* brings nothing of the modern spirit to the ballet, but is none the less welcome for its unaffected use of the well-worn element of the dance. The *Woman without a Shadow*, a return to Strauss's old theme of mother and child, suffers from the obscurity of Hoffmannthal's *libretto* and the conventional treatment of most of the characters. Purification, in the manner of *The Magic Flute*, is the main theme of both poet and composer, and certain weaknesses are revealed more mercilessly than in Strauss's previous operatic work. Beautiful and characteristic things, such as the thrilling close of the Second Act, cannot blind us to the pseudo-lyricism, dramatic lapses and conventionalism in this work, though the music possesses a deceitful charm.

Strauss was strong enough to originate a movement in music, and his influence is discernible not only in Germany, but throughout the musical world.

The inner qualities of his work, his attempt to strike a

balance with externals, to improve the standard of the *libretto*, to spiritualise erotic tendencies, excellent as they were, had little effect on his contemporaries; for they were directed to immediate, rather than to final, ends. His aim at a new synthesis in the spirit of Mozart was unattainable by himself, and had no value for the moderns.

The outer qualities, on the contrary, captured his contemporaries and had many imitators. Strauss did pioneer work in fulfilling and restating the work of Berlioz and Liszt in a new manner and by new methods. An age which had outgrown Romanticism and Wagnerism, was particularly susceptible to the blandishments of rhetoric, whether in words or music.

Strauss satisfied both the more critical intellect and the more acute colour-sense of his period, and on that account his orchestration—a step beyond that of Wagner—became a model for the youth of the early years of the nineteenth century. These enthusiasts, however, frequently overlooked the fact that the delicate colouring of Strauss's orchestra was based on fundamental talent and remarkable musical training, on practised virtuosity, on faithfulness to tonality, disguised at times but never shaken—in short, on a mastery of the art which made union of line and colour possible, adopting the latter without discarding the former.

In opposition to this, the programme was, and is, frequently made the basic principle of form; tone-painting and colour came to be regarded as ends in themselves and Strauss's orchestra was adopted—in externals only—as the strongest means of expressing them. The effective method of enriching a subject by episodes, which may be traced to the *Meistersinger*, was taken for Strauss's main characteristic. In music of this type the theme often arises adventitiously from the music, and many a modern score thrives on Strauss's jokes with the wood-wind and his melodic flourishes, despite the

most shaky foundations. Indeed such mannerisms are epidemic in work turned out for the market at the present day.

This view of Strauss is, however, erroneous. His work is a product of talent and of knowledge, not of caprice, and although one may disapprove of its tendencies, one cannot dispute its solid foundations. Strauss's rewritten edition of Berlioz's *Traité d'instrumentation* proves this to the full.

Strauss's orchestration is founded on conventional harmony; but it is subject to growth and change. In this he is a true disciple of Wagner, and a calculating and conscious artist; but he is simpler, colder, and less systematic, though more hurried, and allows his fancy greater harmonic freedom. He has a sensitive ear for the tonal effect of certain registers for the various combinations of heckelphone, oboe d'amore, saxophone, glockenspiel, pianoforte, even wind-and-thunder-machines; and thus achieved tremendous force of expression in *Ein Heldenleben*, *Electra* and the *Alpine Symphony*. There are few things more astonishing than his use of the celesta in the *Rosenkavalier*, its dissonance being magical in effect. There have been imitators, but the effect has never been reproduced. Strauss's orchestra mirrors himself.

A part of Strauss's work has the stamp of immortality; and another part will retain interest only as the expression of the strongest personality among the greater German musicians. But scarcely any of the work of those composers who have felt his influence without inheriting his power will see the future. That particular source of "external" music has dried up, and most of the work inspired by it is already out of date.

In Germany, the career of E. N. von Reznicek at times brought him very near to Strauss. He inherits musicianship with his Austrian blood; good craftsmanship excludes the

possibility of error from his work; as a conductor, he had the fullest opportunities of studying instrumentation, and his orchestration is always effective; but he is not bold enough to tackle new problems. His nature is joyous, attracted by lightness and simplicity, and it probably conflicts with the technical complications forced upon him by his ear and hand, as well as by his period and the dominance of Strauss. He possesses little real power and after *Donna Diana*, a prepossessing blend of opera and operetta, not far removed from musical comedy, his art has descended to trivialities. Reznicek's revival of the old type of symphony, and the clarity of his orchestration throughout the development of the most tempestuous *motifs*, are praiseworthy; but his *Schlemihl* and *Sieger* are survivals of an outworn type. His opera *Bluebeard* was inspired by *Till Eulenspiegel*, but the partial success of all his operas was due to Herbert Eulenberg's occasionally poetical but obscure and unequal *libretti*. Reznicek achieves grotesque and ghostly effects with astonishing technical skill, but makes shift without any vivid personal perception of his subject. His art has typical, not individual, value; it is skilful both in line and colour, and masters every form of music from the song through chamber and choir music to opera; but it is essentially imitative and unoriginal, depending on mere cleverness and adroit management.

Jean Nicodé, Siegmund von Hausegger, Max von Schillings, Felix von Weingartner, Jean Paul Ertel, Hugo Kaun, Waldemar von Baussnern, Paul Scheinpflug, Ernst Boehe, Fritz Volbach and many others carry on the traditions of German programme-music. Gottlieb Noren, with no bent for grappling with problems, is inspired by Strauss only in his witty *Kaleidoskop Variations*, and has proved himself unequal to dealing with any big idea. In Switzerland, Hans Huber and Volkmar Andreae turned to programme-music. Huber attempts to combine folk-song with it, and he and others have extended the

meaning of the "symphonic poem." Certain of their experiments have achieved notoriety by their very newness.

Strauss has had a denationalising effect on music. Against his will, he tended to minimise the importance of the originating idea, which from first to last gives music a national turn, in favour of orchestration and cosmopolitanism. As a conductor, Strauss was a strong exponent and advocate of his own work, with the result that his influence was first felt in Anglo-Saxon countries.

Curiously enough he has had a powerful effect in Italy (where the cult of the symphony had long been neglected), through Ottorino Respighi, who has adopted and amplified the modern point of view in music. This composer has devoted himself to the tasteful rearrangement of old music. He accommodates his style to a nicety to sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century work, and has gained experience in all forms of concert-music. He was also, as a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakof, affected by present-day programme-music. His *Fountains of Rome* is much more than a translation of vision into terms of sound; it is emotional music of unusual beauty and colour, Italian only in its orchestral clarity, and not altogether original. His programme-music leads him at times to superficiality, but as a symphonic composer he is an upholder of culture in Italy.

The era influenced by Strauss has not given us great musical masterpieces, but it has created a new orchestra as its contribution to musical development. For the moment it may seem to promote mere craftsmanship, rhetorical, literary, semi-philosophical stuff, but in itself it is an improved medium, ready to take the impress of that future music which shall perfect the union of spiritual and material, and solve the problem with which both Mahler and Strauss grappled, different as they were. Of these two men, Strauss, though less deep and less human than Mahler, is the greater musician.

He has solved certain problems; he has done constructive work, and although he has made terms in some degree with the commercialised musical world of his day, he is the only composer who has had power enough to achieve an organic union of cultured with folk music. He is confined, however, by the limitations of his own programme and never touches great depths, nor has he created a new *melos*.

He is the greatest German composer of our day, and, so far, the last one who may fairly be called a genius.

CHAPTER XI

DEBUSSY AND THE IMPRESSIONISTS

France alone of European countries has broken away from the line of musical development which connects Wagner with Strauss, and in doing so has dethroned German music, hitherto dominant in Europe, to make way for the far-reaching doctrines of a Latin ideal. It is remarkable that this spiritual schism was caused not by elementary forces in rebellion, but by the hyper-refinement of an artistic clique. "Impressionism," as it is called, springs from enhanced sensibilities —the artist aims at a deeper intimacy with nature, but the result from overstrung nerves is work which is the very opposite of "natural." It is the fine flower of urban civilisation, of Paris, the most civilised of all cities.

Debussy crowned the work of Berlioz, and by means of his intellect, sensibility and sense of colour, brought about a fundamental change in music. Germany, too, possessed a music in which will-power and strong conviction had been replaced by the decorative effect of complicated rhythm, harmony and richness of orchestral colour—the beauties of decay—which found sensuous expression in Wagner. Highly-strung composers meant highly-strung audiences and an atmosphere of tenseness and oppression.

From the viewpoint of strict musicianship, Richard Strauss sought deliverance from this atmosphere, a short cut from romantic archaism to the modern view of life. He strove to make music more animated, more intuitive, more ethereal, by uniting the characteristics of several musical epochs in himself. As a pure musician he either refused to acknowledge,

or disguised by his technical skill, certain feeblenesses in his work; but such deficiencies were particularly obvious to the penetrating minds and free spirits of intellectual France. Strauss seemed to them both limited and hypertrophic, but they succumbed to Wagner because they recognised that his comprehensive genius had achieved that union of arts which had been presaged in France. Not even the impressionistic effects of *Salome* could make them admire Strauss, for these effects were drawn from sources too alien to be convincing in France; they were too glaring and obvious for a people who, having made "good taste" the basic virtue of their civilisation, were coming to regard it as the basis of the arts also. Wagner had made them forget this temporarily and they were now in a hurry to deny their lapse into *bourgeoisie*.

While Wagner dominated all types of mind, Jules Massenet had been satisfying the *bourgeois* element in France, purveying sweetness with great industry and with lucrative results. Wagner and Massenet, worlds apart as they were, held a similar place in the public estimation and were destined for a similar fall. Claude Debussy was at one time an enthusiastic Wagnerian, and retained traces of Massenet's melodic influence; but his superior intellect and refined taste distinguished him from both. His music was a thing of exclusions and evasions, of wearied senses and hypersensitive nerves. His big, stout body seemed to give promise of a strongly physical nature, but his tanned yet bloodless face, his domed forehead and deep-set eyes are a truer indication of his intellectual brilliance, of his scant masculinity, and of his struggle with an ever-present listlessness from which he nevertheless drew inspiration. He was essentially and naturally inactive; yet he set himself, like Beethoven, to grapple with problems and had to pay for the strain of his creative work

by the sacrifice of much that was fine in his humanity. The morbid state of his nerves made him and his art egotistical, and he had a characteristic irony, even in the expression of emotion.

His work is none the less the fruit of the highest Gallic culture, literary, graphic and, last but not least, musical, although the two former qualities tend to deprive the music as such of its intensity and to substitute for it a beautiful languor. After a century of musical development France was apparently once more mistress of the musical world; but her music, reflecting only the altitude of certain upper strata in French contemporary society, was the negation of passion and emotion.

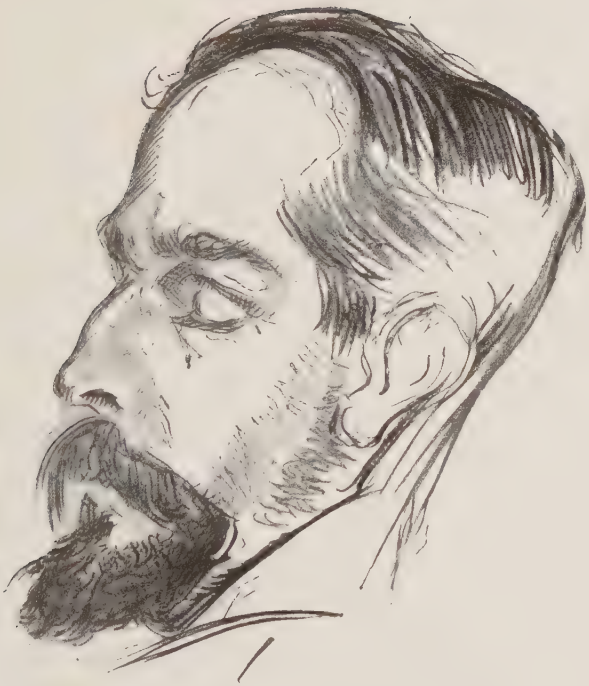
Despite its extreme modernity, French music at this period had no tendency to break away from the past or disown its traditions. Rameau was acknowledged and honoured as an ancestor, but he was so only by a common quality of penetrating discernment. Between Rameau, who initiated the modern theory of music, and Debussy, who applied it in his artistic work, lies the whole tremendous development of German music. Rameau composed with an optimistic eye to the future; Debussy gazed wearily upon the decadence of music.

The cult of the past, so deeply rooted in France, was preserved for musicians in the Parisian *Conservatoire* and the *Schola Cantorum*. It has been the fashion for every musician, ancient or modern, since the time of Berlioz to decry the *Conservatoire* as a museum of fossils, but it is unsurpassed as a school of technique, while the *Schola Cantorum*, founded by Vincent d'Indy, Charles Bordes and Alexandre Guilmant, who brought fully-awakened modern judgment and a perfect feeling for style to bear on the severest work of the past, supplied any deficiencies there might be in the *Conservatoire*. Owing to the influence of these two institutions, the necessity

for a basis of technical ability is more commonly recognised in France than in Germany.

Technical ability and mastery of form have resulted in a vast output of work, which shows little creative originality, but also very little bad *dilettante* stuff. The more seriously the composer takes his work and considers himself one set apart from his fellows, the better for his art.

Debussy had much to surmount before he could strike out a way of his own; he was subject to the influence not only of Wagner and Massenet, but also of César Franck, whose importance in the sonata-form was equal to that of Wagner in opera. Franck, half-Gallic, half-Teuton, may be called "the French Brahms," but his romanticism reached beyond that of Liszt and Wagner, and he worked out his chromaticism, and his unifying theme in the cyclic form, with the self-discipline of a classical master. The capacity for organisation which makes a classic of his A major violin sonata, for instance, had at times a chilling effect on the emotion which begot the work; but the example of this composer, who lived and worked in the obscurity of the organ loft at S. Clotilde and came from most un-Parisian surroundings, did much to raise the *ethos* of French music by inculcating calmness, devotion and the spiritualisation of form. The spirit expressed in Franck's pianoforte and chamber music, in his symphonic poems, D minor symphony, sets of variations and in *The Beatitudes*, is the exact opposite of that of the worldly-minded Saint-Saëns. By intellect and education, Saint-Saëns belonged far more to the age of Liszt and Wagner than did Franck, who expressed the soul of a composer of the classical period with the methods and technique of a modern romantic. Saint-Saëns, on the other hand, with a steady and masterly hand turned out useful music for concert-room and opera,



CLAUDE DEBUSSY UPON HIS DEATH-BED
(By permission of the "Revue Musicale," Paris)

but left no exemplary work, although Gabriel Fauré and André Messager call themselves his disciples.

The second generation already shows in its work the inevitable crisis in the sonata and symphony. In France, above all countries, despite the love of tradition, there was bound to be a clash between the polyphonic forms and the inborn love of colour. The leader of this second generation, Vincent d'Indy, heir and exponent of César Franck, and director of the *Schola Cantorum*, opposes such a transformation of the French spirit. He has absorbed the good German music of his youth and is in close sympathy with Liszt, Wagner and Brahms. On this basis, strengthened by a thorough understanding of mediæval polyphony, he has attempted to construct a genuinely French musical creed. He is heavily laden with ethical and æsthetic opinions, has a firm belief in art as a form of religion and in the possibility of a spiritualised formalism, and builds up his music with the precise logic of a mathematical proposition; but he lacks the strong emotion which gave power to César Franck's works, born though they were in doubt and travail. It is a case of construction overpowering inspiration. Like many another Frenchman he has written music-drama in the Bayreuth manner, but he is too acute a critic of his own symphonies and chamber-music ever to become either banal or Germanic. He has foregone the easy triumphs of gracefulness, but even his *Symphonie sur un thème montagnard*, his curiously inverted *Istar Variations*, which are still occasionally played, are not really compelling.

The disciples of Wagner and Franck began at last to intermingle, the one or the other influence prevailing according to individual inclination to dramatic or chamber music. A young Belgian, Guillaume Lekeu, a disciple of César Franck, marks a tendency, though he died at the age of twenty-four, leaving but one violin sonata of great promise. Another

composer who died early was Ernest Chausson, whose gentle and restrained work was outside the main tendencies of the period. The Breton countryside has inspired the orchestral and chamber music of another pupil of César Franck, Guy Ropartz. The work of Gabriel Pierné is graceful though slight, and his *Crusade of the Children* is occasionally performed. Alfred Bruneau, critic and writer on many topics, makes experiments also in composition, the opera *Messidor* being his most characteristic work. Paul Dukas has a strong sense of form but is nevertheless very adaptable. He has a world-wide reputation for his symphonic poem, *L'Apprenti Sorcier*, which, though strongly reminiscent of the smithy in *Siegfried*, has a characteristically Gallic turn; apart from this one opera he confines himself to the sonata-form. During the period of Wagner's ascendancy, certain amateurs achieved a measure of fame, among them the two friends, Henri Duparc and Emmanuel Chabrier, who came under the spell of *Tristan*, the former producing a few amateurish yet sincerely-felt songs, while the more sensitive Chabrier, who rehearsed Wagner under Lamoureux, rose to some really fine work. Albert Roussel began life as a naval officer, but recognised his musical vocation and studied under Vincent d'Indy. His art is original and sincere, full of a passionate love of the sea, and is a welcome departure from the mannerisms of Parisian cliques. Albéric Magnard showed a more aggressively independent spirit, turning against the prevailing graphic tendencies, scorning the doubts and searchings of his period, and deliberately seeking inspiration in Beethoven. He is unique among French composers for a somewhat anæmic simplicity, and his death in the Great War is much deplored by lovers of his chamber-music. Gabriel Fauré, a refined creative artist, holding aloof from the clamour and glamour of the stage, has done distinctive work in this branch of music. Finally we come to one who, though he has not yet attained

full powers of expression, is an absolutely original musician—Erik Satie, of whom there is more to be said in a later chapter.

Such was the musical atmosphere in which Debussy moved. Satie exercised an important influence upon him and it is useless to deny the effect of César Franck's neo-romantic classicism on his work; it gave him a distinct architectonic ground-plan. His Wagnerianism, on the other hand, was almost wholly covered up by the influence of Mussorgsky. Louis Laloy has described how this occurred between two pilgrimages to Bayreuth, but he believes that Debussy was less strongly moved by the score of *Boris Godunof* (which he knew in its original form, without Rimsky-Korsakof's improvements) than by the gipsy music which he heard and studied in Russia. However strongly a Frenchman and an intellectual such as Debussy might be captivated by exotic music, it is none the less certain that it was Mussorgsky who imbued him with his distinctive musical mood. Some twenty years earlier, Mussorgsky, without academic training as he was, had in a kind of trance, half consciously, half instinctively, shaken off the fetters of tradition and revealed the germ of a picturesque and independent style apart from his conventional *arias* and *finales*. The dramatic instinct, influenced by Wagner and Dargomijsky, was diverted and became first vaguely suggestive, then genuinely impressionistic. It is significant that this should have taken place in Russia, which had much in common with France both in speech and outlook, while remaining in far closer touch with primitive forces through the lower ranks of its social order. From the moment that Debussy heard Mussorgsky's music, a union was consummated between the French spirit, with senses *blasé* but still susceptible, and the Russian spirit of mingled brute force and intellect.

Architectonic feeling, the natural inheritance of a Frenchman and a pupil of the *Conservatoire*, and love of vagueness, the sign of an over-refined, feminine and poetic nature—two apparently opposite forces, the one binding, the other loosing —are to be found in Debussy's work, together with a critical ear for what was stale in the music of the past.

Nothing tests a composer's capacity so mercilessly as chamber-music—its transparent texture betrays every flaw —and Debussy was able to stand this test very early. His G minor string quartet, besides being a wonderful synthesis of those binding and loosing forces of which we have spoken, is an unmistakable expression of the composer's individuality. In this difficult combination there is neither hesitancy nor experimentation; its cyclic construction arises in a logical use of material; the basic *motiv* changes rhythmically and harmonically in accordance with the change of mood. The total impression is one of a very individual tone finely shaded, worked out with complete certainty of touch, the heritage of French culture; and this work of art was achieved at a time when Max Reger in Germany was exhibiting himself in chamber-music as a fumbling barbarian. Still, Reger was a battleground of dæmonic forces, while beneath Debussy's intellectual superiority and mastery of his art there was much that was timid and superficial. He was content to have achieved one perfect model of four-part chamber-music, and for the present his creative energy was expended. Instead of the dramatic battling with opposing themes—the struggles which have made César Franck's constructive principles of universal application—there was nothing but the niggardly expenditure of a small hoard, leaving no remainder. The basic tone of melancholy, inspired by his experiences of exotic music, is worked out to the bitter end.

Meanwhile, other formative influences were at work in

Debussy's life. During the nineties he came into contact with poets, painters, æsthetes and men of letters, for whose society he had a natural inclination, and this intercourse strengthened the impressionism to which his style already tended, and which was the only means of giving definite expression to the connection which undoubtedly exists between music and poetry, word and sound. The impressionistic painters, moreover, revealed to Debussy the relationship between nature and music.

The clique which gathered about the æsthete and poet, Stephane Mallarmé, were also closely connected with Baudelaire, from whose *Fleurs du mal* rose an intoxicating odour of decay, prophetic of the fate of an over-ripe culture. The charm of an artistic paradise founded on surfeited sensualism and exhaustion, kept going by hashish and opium, was and is a very powerful one. Théophile Gautier, Baudelaire (whom he had hailed as a novice with such sentimental enthusiasm), Verlaine and Maeterlinck were all of one brotherhood; their senses were vitiated by the perversions of Parisian life, their nerves over-stimulated, their over-cultivated minds filled with a morbid dread of the commonplace. Whether they called themselves Symbolists, or claimed kinship with the English Pre-Raphaelites, they were all consciously "decadents," seeking singularity because they had lost touch with nature. Some of them, such as Verlaine and Maeterlinck, however, were not saved from being frequently both commonplace and tasteless. The delicate values pursued by the decadents could only exist in the rarified atmosphere of an æsthetic culture which analysed and froze the springs of feeling; yet they resorted to Wagner as to a strong drug, intellectually curious of his effect on themselves. Was this advance or retrogression? Though the French romantics with Gautier at their head indirectly stimulated music, they were essentially unmusical; the younger members of the sect,

however, gave themselves up to the intoxication of music and dedicated much of their literary work to that art.

The whole spirit of the artists of this period was against strong passion, but it promoted freedom and delicacy in the handling of an artistic medium. Fear of emotions of which they knew themselves incapable, scorn of the common man and the tyranny of intellect, drove them to half-tones, hints and vagueness in representation, and to a high degree of artistry in form. This tendency is to be found in all the arts, with varying results.

Poetry became a highly "literary" hunt for the *mot juste*, non-lyrical, alternating between mysticism and banality, balanced between the positive and the negative.

Great work was done in painting; men of considerable intellect, but of little passion, achieved freedom and exquisite delicacy in the use of their medium. With sensitive, introspective egotism they turned from the secure ground of outward appearance to the test of their own inward sensations. The pictures of Monet, Pizarro and Sisley are based on such cognitions combined with fine craftsmanship and an innate sense of form. Half-tones, suggestions and mistiness of treatment were considered the last and best attainments of the painter's art. Everything purposive was carefully excluded from the presentation and any appearance of ratiocination was to be avoided; abject surrender to the impression of the moment was the ideal aimed at. Even faithful observation of the effects of light, which was one of the virtues of the school, was principally confined to the studio, giving their pictures the stamp of Paris and its high urban culture.

In this circle Debussy found much to nourish his peculiar genius. His string quartet proved that he could command a polyphonic style which was half-way to impressionism, while he had already purged his melodies of the sickly-sweet pseudo-lyricism which characterised the school of Gounod

and Massenet. This originally strong element in his work is disclosed in his early *Suite Bergamesque*, and particularly in the tender *Clair de Lune*, and is yet more striking in his collaboration with the romantic poet, Théodore de Banville, where he reminds one of Massenet enharmonically led towards a Grieg.

This Massenet-like quality in Debussy's melody was crowded out on the one hand by the influence of exotic music, on the other by that of Mussorgsky and by the composer's innate love of the graphic method. His imagination was haunted by the polite ornamentation, the marvellously translucent form and the delicate perfume of the old clavecinists, and his mastery of the art enabled him to reflect the romantic period, even while his development was tending rapidly away from it. Couperin was a fundamental inspiration to Debussy, but he found the revelation of Chopin's acute perception of sound and sense of touch yet more intoxicating. Here was a kindred soul, with a capacity—not unlike his own—for making a virtue of lack of creative power, who could open to him a kingdom of sound hitherto but superficially explored. Through strong racial feeling, Chopin's emotional, hermaphrodite nature had discovered new shades of sound, a new language of the soul, and a smoothly gliding technique, accentually weak, which was to serve Debussy for the expression of his moods, both as man and pianist. It must not be forgotten, however, that Liszt, the father of all the moderns, strongly influenced Debussy's pianoforte compositions.

The graphic art of the *Années de Pèlerinage* and the *Études d'exécution transcendante*, the mysticism of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (which open the door to *Parsifal* for Wagner in his last and weakest phase, the only Wagner of whom Debussy was a disciple) are the sources of a pianoforte style unmistakably modern yet blending traditional homophony with its own individual twilight mood, reconciling dissonance

and consonance, setting precious chords at random in the matrix of expression. As Debussy wrote his enchanted reflections of reflections, without any fixed plan, he made accidental discoveries with the result that the pianoforte became the favourite instrument of an etherealised generation of musicians.

The assistance of poetry or painting was, however, necessary to make him triumph over his innate weakness. As a former Wagnerian his highest ambition was to set up a music-drama in opposition to the work of the master whom he had now forsworn, and in Maeterlinck's symbolical *Pelléas et Mélisande* he found a drama of mystic darkness, full of strange riddles, the very thing to bring out the mysticism in his own music. The decade which he devoted to this, the principal work of his life (it was produced in 1902), saw the solution of many problems of expression in song and orchestral composition.

As a student in Rome he had been clear-sighted enough to grasp the possibilities of a poem by the Pre-Raphaelite Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and had written the music to *The Blessed Damozel*. His settings for Verlaine's *Ariettes oubliées* and five poems of Baudelaire made yet another step towards a complete understanding between poetry and music, and the delicate intuitive spirit of Mallarmé himself became through his *Eclogue*—faintly touched with sensuality as it is—an inspiration to the youthful composer.

He surpassed Wagner in his ambition to express in music every shade of meaning in the spoken word (the French word, be it understood), passionless, tasteful, subdued alike in mood and expression. Even when he freed himself from the word and dealt in orchestral sound alone, his music was made subservient to poetry, illustrative and impressionistic; his aim was to shake off the traditional symmetry of music, to give it the freer formation of poetry, or to achieve new forms embodying the qualities of both arts.

Wagner had recently greatly increased the colouristic capacity of the German orchestra; the reds and purples of the brass, the blues and greens of the wood-wind triumphantly expressed the most violent transitions of mood. It remained for France, where such extremes of passion were wanting, to modify these media to suit its individual spirit. The brass, which had always been used more sparingly in that country, was still further subdued in order to allow play for the delicate shades of expression obtainable from less powerful instruments; the wood-wind became of the utmost importance, the harp was much employed for its mystic suggestion, while the colour-values of triangle, bells and gongs were freely utilised. The *divisi* strings were muted, and there was naturally no doubling of instruments for the sake of giving increased prominence to the melody. Polyphony, a method of achieving symmetry either real or apparent but invariably increasing the volume of sound, also declined. The whole tendency was towards giving each instrument a more delicate and keener value by sparing use, and the effect achieved is that of an orchestra which only occasionally raises its voice above a whisper. The colours, though unmixed, are never brilliant, but are as though seen through a thin, clear veil.

Just as the impressionist painter refers the messages conveyed by the eyes to the brain, so does the impressionist musician listen for the tone-colour of his instruments, each with its own characteristic overtones. By such a system Debussy achieved wonderful results, more determinative, in his own opinion, than those of Wagner in *Tristan*, who in that work relied for much of his effect on the strength of the univeral erotic instinct.

He was not, however, satisfied. "This great painter of dreams," as Romain Rolland called him, needed a freer harmonic medium to give full expression to the delicate, almost imperceptible shades to which his *décadence* made

him sensitive. Wagner's use of chromatics and appoggiaturas of the prolonged suspension and the delayed resolution, as also the freely placed appoggiatura which seeks resolution anywhere, all these were rejected as symptomatic of *bourgeois* passion and sensuality, of noisy vulgarity, though they may equally be said to express *bourgeois* respect for law and order. Be that as it may, these choice souls needed an unusual harmonic medium wherewith to express their extraordinary sensibility and untrammelled intellect. The pure triad, or common chord, to which Wagner had held as a justification, was gradually eliminated; the odd charm of consecutive fifths (forbidden by the academical musical grammars, but frequently used in the course of harmonic evolution) was exploited. There was a tendency to lawlessness in the intervals of both the chord and the melody; fifths, fourths, seconds, and chromatic alterations found favour in the harmony; in short, the fetters of tonality were thrown off and atonality was established. It was an atonality, however, not hostile to tunefulness. On the contrary, the graduated low tones of the orchestra and the delicately shaded colour-sense produced an ethereal beauty of sound in which all refractory elements appeared to dissolve. On the other hand, unresolved discords proclaim an exhausted and surfeited sensuality; drowsiness and excitement are curiously blended; it is a dreamland of the intellectuals with a perfume and intoxication of its own. As we listen we detect the Wagnerian chord of the ninth used again and again as a point of departure, outwardly expanded, inwardly altered; we notice a faint echo of the prolonged suspension, and realise that the whole-tone scale, which is the foundation of this apparently scaleless harmony, is quite firmly established—particularly in the series of major thirds.

The subdued tone and the strain for agreement in the orchestra had already weakened rhythm, and the harmony

loosened it yet more; but, curiously enough, all the essentials of a *genre* rhythm, that of the dance, are particularly noticeable in Debussy's purely symphonic works, being very marked in *La Mer*, for example. One begins to realise that dance and song are the remote origins of this music, though the composer lacked the power to deal with the great forms which suggested themselves to his poetic and graphic imagination. No elemental forces were needed to break up the rhythm; the least tendency to form a clear pattern was at once frustrated by a duple or triple counter-rhythm or by other such means.

There was thus a natural development from the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un Faune*—the earliest and most astounding proof of the charm of subdued colour in the expression of subdued sensuousness—to the *Nocturnes*, delicately mingled impressions of sea, cloud, songs of sirens and a mournful chorus of women's voices. One is made to feel the lulling effect of the sea on the townsman's overstrained intellect, by its strange transmutation in Debussy's music, and is reminded of the effect of the sight of the mountains on the youthful Wagner. Debussy attempted to set down once and for all the charm of the sea, the eternal change and play of light and wind over its restless surface, and its impression on the poetic nature in man. *La Mer* is the fruit of open-air study, but it is clear that it came from a weary heart.

In all the above orchestral works, which were followed by the third part of the *Images* and the manifold wonders of *Iberia*, musical architecture, the art of timing, seemed for the first time to be completely dominated by painting, the art of spacing, sequence being subordinate to contiguity. The result was an ingenious illusion of a form, apparently but not really independent of the sonata, for music can never actually become painting. It may renounce the divisions, antitheses and repetitions of the sonata-form, but even when most impressionistic it remains bound to the elements and

dependent on the developments of its own past history. Nevertheless, the form was on the whole graphic, despite a disposition to musical moulding, and it was astonishingly perfect. It was, however, bound up with intellectualism and can only be appreciated by a mind capable of speedy associations and swift translations of the things of space into terms of the things of time. Many a purely and naturally musical listener is incapable of these mental exercises, and to such this music of *nuances* will always be entirely alien.

In the meantime, *Pelléas et Mélisande* had been completed and impressionism had become the fashionable style of the period, with Debussy (who had become musical correspondent to an advanced newspaper, the *Revue blanche*) as its prophet. His able pen attacked Beethoven, Gluck, and of course Wagner, with great acumen, but like every contemporary musician he regarded Bach and Mozart as holy and unassailable. He was, moreover, just to Richard Strauss, although alien in spirit.

About the year 1900 the stamp of impressionism is noticeable in almost every phase of life and thought. It struck a curious alliance with *Verismo*, which in its turn found a *modus vivendi* with *Symbolism*, logically opposed though it was to this somewhat insincere cult. In the midst of much wordy warfare, many an impressionist found himself impeded by remnants of that *bourgeois* outlook against which he was a declared rebel.

Impressionism had affected opera before *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and it meant an advance in colourism. It had a striking influence on Puccini's work in the nineties. He drew his material from a French and definitely non-*bourgeois milieu*, only to become all the more seductive to the *bourgeois* themselves. In *Manon* and *La Bohème* he used the new Parisian tints to add point and piquancy to his lyricism which alter-

nated between tender *chanson* and highly effective *aria*. After the sensation caused by the appearance of *La Tosca*, the Parisian critics in a body fell upon Puccini for his want of taste; nevertheless it was the influence of impressionism, dragged from the twilight of the symbolists into the full glare of the obvious, which made possible the skipping sham-exoticism of *Madam Butterfly*, and the studied theatricality of *The Girl of the Golden West*. In the first of Puccini's *Trittico*, a triptych of one-act operas, the brutality of the finale is preceded by a marvellously delicate representation of the changing moods of water and the human spirit. Only a genius could have effected such a reconciliation of impressionism with his own very external art.

Impressionism had an equally curious effect on Gustave Charpentier, the composer of *Louise*. He proclaimed himself a *décadent* by composing music on Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal*, and he was generally considered an Impressionist, but there was something of the small townsman about him, a fact glaringly obvious when he makes his little working-class Bohemian girl proclaim the gospel of free love. In the midst of the so-called impressionism with which he reproduces the cries of Paris, he finds room for echoes of *Tristan*, for use of the *leit-motiv* and for contrapuntal methods and, what is particularly significant, for romances and duets as effective as any of Massenet's. Charpentier is an eclectic with a skilful trick of exploiting sentimentality, but he is less creative than Puccini, who, having summed up his Parisian experiences in a convenient little formula of his own, found in *Gianni Schicchi*, the third part of his triptych, a good working recipe for musical comedy.

Puccini and Charpentier, the former regarded somewhat askance by the musical world, the latter received with open arms as a typical Parisian, were established favourites at the *Opéra comique* when *Pelléas et Mélisande* was first produced

there. In their works, impressionism, which naturally abhors an outline, was forced into the frame of the mixed art of opera, which needs particularly definite outlines to make it at all effective. Debussy displayed the inwardness of impressionism by pushing it to its remotest logical conclusions.

His single music-drama stands between an orchestral suite by Gabriel Fauré, an attempt to interpret Maeterlinck's play in a new manner, and Paul Dukas' *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* (also after Maeterlinck and destined for the *Opéra comique*). Paul Dukas is technically skilful, though inclined to be imitative and much influenced by Debussy. Through neo-Wagnerism he has made a notable attempt to establish impressionism—which he honours for its ethereal qualities, though it is not really natural to him — on a firm symphonic basis.

Pelléas et Mélisande has been called the beginning of a new operatic art, but it would be nearer truth to call it an end. The opera in all its forms has ever depended on the sensuous effect of a combination of opposing forces, but *Pelléas et Mélisande* has nothing to do with these. It is derived from debilitated sensuality and exhaustion; and, as the natural result of an æsthetic philosophy which refuses to acknowledge the true end of sensual excitement, it consists in evasion and negation. Maeterlinck, a poet but no dramatist, has been at great pains to show the emptiness of an art which aims at intense significance, thereby establishing his foregone conclusions as a symbolist, while Debussy with even greater pains and more convinced dejection, has faithfully matched emptiness with emptiness. Only the powerful pressure of friends persuaded him to combine his fragments of musical composition on this theme into one whole. His highly graphic lyricism was the product of superior intellect joined to unerring taste, and though he followed a logical and original line of development, it was blemished nevertheless by over-

sensitiveness, exhaustion, and a positive horror of emotional outbursts which left no room for passion. It was meant to be a revitalisation in accordance with tradition; but it was, in fact, a brilliant refutation of dramatic music.

The delicacy of Maeterlinck's poetic prose is unusual and remarkable on the stage, while the restraint of vocal and orchestral expression is absolutely unique. There is not a trace of melodrama and the recitative, from which every suggestion of passionate speech is excluded by rigorous avoidance of extremes in pitch or duration of tone, is even less expressive than in Debussy's tone-pictures on Pierre Louys' text, *Chanson de Bilitis*. It would indeed have been a mistake to attempt to give vocal expression to the inexpressible, or to interpret the language of weird beings who are intended to be neither more nor less than secrecy personified. Instead we find a rapid change of scenes, through which runs a thread of monotonous appeal like a mournful litany, rising only here and there to human emotion. In this instance, however, by a unique treatment of "spoken song," the demand for unity of feeling between words and music, a demand raised with varying degrees of insistence from the time of Monteverdi to Wagner, finds complete satisfaction.

The vocal music is supported by an orchestration which carries the virtue of restraint to its limit. *Leitmotiv* is there, but it lacks rhythm and is therefore invertebrate and achieves no true development. It sounds at times like a distraught version of Puccini's treatment of *motiv*, carried by rapid semiquavers, or reminds one in its suggestion of sadness of Mahler's *Lied von der Erde*. Qualified homophony replaces symphonic *leitmotiv*, while the despised sequence is restored to a place of honour. There is here an apparently primitive quality (which in reality is not primitive at all but is an expression of intense refinement) acquired by Debussy in his contact with Russian music in general and Rimsky-Korsakof's melodious

inflexibility in particular. The *motif* is repeated in order to give light and shade to the mood, chords are contrasted in the manner of the " values " in painting, changes of *tempo* are frequent, while various rhythmic forms are used in combination. The work is an example of impressionism and pointillism in being; here are no definite outlines, yet the whole attains unity by perfect adaptation of means to an end.

The emotion underlying the work is another matter. Perfect artistic freedom, a highly intellectualised music and creative effort are stultified by lack of human feeling. Hence arises a poverty of sensual emotion unheard of in earlier opera. Although the music runs easily, the orchestration is sapless and passionless, while full of subdued and delicate colour. The effect at first is enchanting, then, after a little, extremely wearisome.

Debussy died before he accomplished his plan of rivalling Wagner's *Tristan*. One can guess what such a work would have been like. Traces of *Tristan* and *Parsifal*, particularly of that mood in them which aspires to Nirvana, are to be found in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, translated into the impressionist formula. In Debussy's music-drama there is no promise for the future. His further attempts, such as his setting for D'Annunzio's *Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien*, and a few other fragments, are undistinguished. He stood at a dead end.

When we turn from this delicately shaded, yet laboured and monotonous work to Debussy's pianoforte compositions, we fall once more under his spell. His finest and most individual work was for the keyboard. Its charm arises from the composer's exquisitely sensitive ear, which enables him to indicate in sound the apparently inexpressible by an artistic transvaluation of virtuosity which makes melody, harmony and rhythm mirror the very shadow of a dream. The piano

is an instrument perfectly adapted to an intellectually controlled imagination like Debussy's, and to the keyboard he brought the fruits of experience in all branches of his art, making it more and more a true means of interpretation until over-assiduity betrayed his imaginative weakness.

At the time of the completion of his music-drama, Debussy reached his high-water mark as a composer for the pianoforte. The *Estampes* are splendid and colourful visions of the East; but it is the East seen through the eyes of a consciously superior intellectual Frenchman, that same Frenchman who was unable to contemplate the *Masques* of Italian comedy or the antics of the children in the *Children's Corner* without irony. At moments the graphic effect is almost palpable. The *Préludes* show imaginative strain all too clearly.

It seems that the fire of the senses had burned low in Debussy before the last decade of his life, to be replaced by something very like routine, a routine, however, which retained traces of intellectual brilliance. Thereafter followed intense physical suffering and then the war. The sum total of the master's technical conquests went to create the electric *Douze Études*, a work likely to become a classic.

Gifted as he was, there was nothing cosmic or inspired about Debussy's work, as is proved by the fact that he never produced anything incomplete. Each work he undertook was, from the outset, clearly visualised from its opening to its closing note. He had nothing like the hysterically projected determination of Berlioz, who laid the foundation and planned the carrying out of a union of two cultures. Debussy used every resource of intellect and of taste to perfect a flower garden, which garden was his world, and a small world at that. He called himself " Claude Debussy, musicien français," and that is just what he was. In the last resort the creatures

of his imagination defy analysis. They have to be enjoyed as a whole; unsympathetic dissection destroys them. In the smaller forms he had, indeed, encountered all kinds of obstacles; but he overcame them and attained unity by the invention of a simulated rhythm, just as the impressionist painter unifies his arbitrarily selected subject by means of the frame which he pretends to despise.

Debussy's work was transitory rather than final. His blended colouring, something between that of Monet and Degas, his exoticism and artificial gaiety, cannot disguise the melancholy which lay upon his soul.

As Egon Wellesz, Debussy's most persuasive advocate in the German tongue, has proved, he aimed in his later works at a new classicism and his sonatas for various instruments show his search for a synthesis. But it is also clear that he had not sufficient power for a new and strong simplicity. Nature made him over-sensitive and life exhausted his powers. In art, which reflects the man, he had come to the end of his resources.

His importance, however, cannot easily be exaggerated. Debussy was a sign of the times. With great penetration he collected just those elements of value in creative music which were peculiarly French and played them off against foreign influences, which, however, proved strongest in the end. He fulfilled himself and, while dangerous to imitators, he is a powerful stimulus in European musical circles, and in the cultured world.

The influence exercised by Parisian cliques is all the more powerful because their proceedings are not watched and thus compelled to moderation by the interest of the greater public, and such an atmosphere favours the emergence of sham genius. In the period preceding the Great War, the *Société*

indépendante de Musique had taken upon itself the duties and privileges of musical king-making. It favoured inbreeding and nurtured, developed and belauded a highly artificial tendency in music.

Parisian impressionism began to play with exotic colouring, while the taste for intellectual piquancy and harmonic enrichment came from Édouard Lalo through Saint-Saëns to Emmanuel Chabrier, and the resultant sudden and unforeseen flowering of Debussyism seized on and made use of the exotic element in Spain, Russia, Japan and elsewhere.

In a Parisian group consisting of Roger-Ducasse, Louis Aubert, Gustave Samazeuilh, Maurice Ravel and Florent Schmitt, the last two are outstanding. Ravel has been called on the one hand an imitator of Debussy, and on the other (by such an able writer as Émile Vuillermoz) belauded as a composer of the future. The first estimate is an undervaluation; the second is exaggerated praise.

Ravel is an embodiment of the style of the period, occasionally resembling Debussy at his best, but never completely dominated by him. The Southerner is more natural, stronger and more masculine. He too has a natural sense of tone-colour which has made his pianoforte music very notable, and the play of wit in his *Miroirs* and *Gaspard de la Nuit* is delightful. His string-quartet shows how he differed from Debussy, whose texture was finer and whose architectural sense was unmistakable, despite his misty colouring. Debussy never entirely excluded polyphony in chamber-music, he transfigured it rather; but to Ravel it is non-existent and he remains consistently homophonic. The result is bold harmony, enhanced colour, without possibility of further development or progress. It is not surprising to find that Ravel was at one time in the main stream of normal French melody.

He is not highly lyrical, but wit and irony give much graphic charm to his *Histoires naturelles*, songs with pianoforte accom-

paniment, which are very much to the point, as also the one-act comedy *L'heure espagnole*, an entertaining story of matrimonial entanglements. Grace and deftness characterise all Ravel's work. He follows the fashion of seeking inspiration in symbolism and in exotic—especially Spanish—music. *Schéhérazade*, *Rhapsodie espagnole*, a pianoforte concerto on Basque themes, *Valse nobles et sentimentales*, *Daphnis et Chloë* (ballet), songs on the words of Verlaine and Mallarmé—the very titles show his care-free delight in colour. When he undertakes serious work in the greater forms he does violence to his nature.

Florent Schmitt is more earnest, less brilliant, less occupied with impressionism and more advanced in colourism than Ravel. He has attempted all kinds of composition, for the stage and otherwise, but is at his best in chamber-music.

We have now traced the course of French impressionism in the musical world. It was the most striking phenomenon since Wagner; it cut across the line of development indicated by Strauss, and influenced the whole world, but most particularly the countries without a very strong musical tradition. It crops up again in the very newest art, and that side of the movement which was inclined to discard melodic idea as unessential, accentuates a certain intellectual standard in modern music. Its aim is exactly opposite to that of Strauss, who struck a bargain with intellectualism and attempted a synthesis of the mind and the senses, a blend of Mozart and folk-music, not omitting Strauss! Debussy, on the other hand, also called upon the name of Mozart, but the resulting music was so bloodless as to be a mere intellectual abstraction. Both masters symptomise a critical phase in the history of music. Neither is conclusive; but while Debussy, perfect in his kind, offers no hope for the future, Strauss with all his imperfections faces the dawn of a new day.

CHAPTER XII

EXPRESSIONISM AND ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG

Musical progress becomes yearly more rapid; this is perhaps because composers, chafing under the limitations of an outworn medium, resenting their almost oppressive musical heritage, are struggling to achieve something positive. Impressionism is followed by Expressionism. Their partisans betray a painful state of tension and inevitably over-emphasise their own points of view; thus arises a "movement." Intellectual and critical analysis of every scrap of music in the past and present has a bewildering, stultifying and hampering effect on the present-day composer and his work. The evidence from exhaustive research into the minds and aims of bygone musicians fogs rather than illuminates contemporary composers.

Debussy's influence on the musical world remains far from negligible; but, in the meantime, an entirely different course towards atonality has been mapped out in Vienna, the home of Schubert, where the waltz has from time immemorial been the rhythmical expression of physical well-being and careless enjoyment, and where there is an apparently inexhaustible supply of sensuous tunefulness. It was perhaps natural that the strongest reaction against tonality should begin here. While in France atonality was modified by an inborn sense of tonality, a highly conscious appreciation of colour, of harmony and of pleasant sound, by a smooth and subdued technique, Schönberg went remorselessly to the point. Impressionism and the art of Arnold Schönberg derive, indeed, from entirely different artistic view-points. In the first

case, music becomes a fascinating and amenable slave to painting, poetry and literature; in the second, it assumes a sturdy independence, accepting the occasional assistance of poetry, but for the most part remaining music pure and simple. It is tempting to assign to the painter's art a share in Schönberg's work, the more so that he did for a time paint pictures; but though the most modern school of painting, by its attempt to be "absolute," to express emotion by means of line and colour alone, flatters music and may offer certain parallels, it tends to decline into handicraft and design, while so-called "expressionist" music aims at art and art alone.

Musical impressionism, while rejecting romanticism in theory, did not transcend it in practice, but Schönberg excluded romanticism as absolutely as he did tone-colour regarded as an end in itself. The fierce hatred of romanticism in all its forms, and the absolute logic of his art, can only be understood in the light of the psychology of Schönberg's race and generation. He presents the curious phenomenon of creative will under the strict censorship of intellect, critical yet convinced of its own absolute *naïveté*.

Schönberg shows his Jewish blood by a passionate exclusion of the palpable and the representational, combined with a sophistication which would leave nothing unproved. These qualities would appear mutually exclusive, but they contrive to exist side by side in Schönberg and must finally cramp his creative imagination.

Schönberg's devotion to Mahler is sufficiently explained, not only by their personal relationship—Mahler believed in Schönberg's future—but by the re-incarnation in the younger man of the elder's Christ-like idealism. For this reason, the disciples of Schönberg follow Mahler and *vice versa*.

The imaginative quality of the two composers was essentially very unlike. Schönberg lacks altogether Mahler's sympathy with nature and the primitive. As a child of the twentieth

Schlosser and Wenisch, Prague

ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG

century he suffers more than Mahler from the terrific burden of the past which forces him and his contemporaries to seek new forms of expression. Within the limits of the theatre, Mahler was genuinely *naïf*. Schönberg believes himself to be so, and is indeed *naïf* in so believing. It is common knowledge that Schönberg disputes a certain triviality in Mahler's work and sets out to demonstrate its opposite. He is fully convinced of his ability to demonstrate anything, every idea and every emotion. He argues beauty away as an invention of the unproductive; he would profess to prove that he was himself *naïf*! The very fact that he can so think, speak and write gives him away.

Dialecticism, excess of cleverness constantly seeking expression, fetter the creative artist in Schönberg. Other artists let their works speak for them, but in him the spirit of controversy is almost as strong as the spirit of creative work. The result is that since 1914 Schönberg has given the world little music of value, but has nevertheless exercised a vast influence, increasing as his productivity lessens, through the fanatic devotion of his disciples. Such influence would be inexplicable apart from a basis of real worth, and Schönberg is no mere schoolmaster but a valuable guide to all who take a serious interest in present-day music. His opinion is worth the attention of those who are far from being Schönbergians. He is confessedly a power to be reckoned with; according to some, a power of darkness, but, in the opinion of others, a true prophet.

As we study the course of Schönberg's work, its spiritual hypotheses reveal themselves and we find that it is a sincere attempt to get at the secret roots of music. Hitherto each musical adventurer, even the boldest, had taken certain elements of his art for granted; even Liszt, the most powerful

revolutionary force in nineteenth-century music, built upon the foundations of romanticism, beginning his enterprising experiments in form and content from that standpoint, while it has long been recognised that Wagner's originality consisted solely in his mighty comprehensiveness. Strauss's link with the past is plain, and Debussy, while apparently turning music upside-down, never lost touch with tradition even in his most nihilistic forms. Schönberg, however, questions all the elements of music with ruthless logic and seeks a new *melos* after ridding himself, as he believes, of every scrap of tradition. An urge to expansiveness and an urge to enjoyment through decoration, are axiomatic in every musical form, sound being the medium through which these motive forces find expression. They are of the essence even of that type of music which seeks to go beyond actuality and definite concepts; for, in so far as it is an art of emotion rather than of interpretation, it requires expansion as much as ornamentation.

"Sequence" or "Rosalia" had formerly satisfied the desire for expansion, both in a spiritual and a temporal sense, and had also cemented a form which was groping for symmetry and needed repetitions and eliminations to keep its incorporeal substance together. Advanced music substitutes the "sequence of expression" for the older form, which as early as the Romantic period had been convenient in effecting modulations in common times. Richard Wagner used it in this manner, sacrificing his impulse to please to his ideal of expressionism. Schönberg, determined to create an absolute expressionist art, went to the root of the matter, stifled the impulse to expansiveness and discarded "sequence." It was a method both of expansion and symmetry, so it had to go. The subject was to be perfectly expressed in a single statement; any dilation would spoil its intensity. The full close, the stereotyped cadence, everything which appears to be derived from

symmetry or from duple time, had been weakened in previous developments and finally broken by Debussy. "Sequence" alone was tolerated, if not highly valued, under the impressionist *régime*.

In laying a sacrilegious hand on the principle of sequence, Schönberg shook every form, whether classical or Wagnerian, to its foundations; but he believed that in promoting extreme modernism he was taking part in the "eternal return" of the old masters. He set himself now to create and express "absolute music" with the utmost force and insistence, avoiding representation. One thing indeed he was obliged to share with all composers both past and present, and that was sound, the material of his art; and even this he was determined to make as different as was humanly possible. The idea of beauty, variable as it is by nature, he argued away entirely; and the emotions and thoughts of common humanity—also less well-defined than is generally supposed—were discarded as immaterial to a ruthless search for truth and truthful expression. All obstacles to originality were demolished in an emotional dialectic by no means purged of passion. The somewhat one-sided originality of a developing personality spurned all traditional rules. Schönberg's sense of tone was at first romantically beautiful, but in his later work it is non-existent. He has succeeded in arguing it away, but in the course of this curious strife between reason and imagination, he has passed through certain remarkable phases which have no counterpart in modern music.

Chamber-music and Wagner are the poles of Schönberg's art. His love of chamber-music is connected with his tendency to contrapuntal combinations, and this again is bound up with his theories. Every musician of the period has felt the spell of Wagner—Schönberg particularly strongly, because he is familiar with the allied arts of poetry and painting, his interest in poetry being even more ardent than his love of colour.

Tristan was for him an epoch-making experience. Its colouring —at once sensuous and metaphysical—has left traces on his own very different work. The graphic and representational qualities of music-drama found an echo in Schönberg, but could not alter his abstract bent. At first this mood in him deepened rather than injured his sense of tone; but, as his contrapuntal leanings became stronger and less accommodating, a crisis became inevitable. The sextet *Verklärte Nacht*, and the songs of the same period (showing the deep impression made on the composer by the verse of Richard Dehmel), are a poetic fusion of *Tristan* with chamber-music (Wagner preponderating), a delightfully perspicuous expression of ardent lyricism and sympathy with nature.

Pelléas et Mélisande marks the parting of the ways between Schönberg and Debussy. At this stage, Schönberg is still a Wagnerian, a "tone-poet" and lyricist, but non-dramatic. Still cleaving to *Tristan*, he imitates the scenes of representational drama and weaves its polyphony into his own work. The result has charm, and moral earnestness at times lends it individuality, making it better than a mere copy of Wagner, but it is feebly supported by rhythm.

The influence of Wagner was as yet by no means exhausted. After the sextet, Schönberg designed and began the *Gurre-Lieder*, a work dedicated to the spirit of Wagner; it took him ten years to complete. This ballad-cycle on the grand scale for soli, choirs and orchestra was Schönberg's final attempt at original work in the Wagnerian manner. It exploits the outlook and technique of Wagner to the uttermost, but the last part of the *Gurre-Lieder* touches on a later phase of the composer's development and expresses abstractions.

So far, we have dealt with the romantic Schönberg, full of beauty, but Wagnerian. Meanwhile another and anti-Wagnerian Schönberg was maturing, nurtured on pure chamber-music, independent of colourism and given to theory

and abstractions. He was ready to begin the Expressionist campaign against expansiveness and hedonism in music.

He approached the problems of form with a predisposition to horizontal treatment, seeking by this means to link up—though with modern reservations—to Bach and the skeleton style of Beethoven's last string-quartet. His theory that fourths should form the imaginative basis of the new *melos* conflicted with his harmonic experiences and sense of consonance. Little by little, he undermined architectonic tradition, particularly those theories of thematic work which controlled the structure and behaviour of the sonata. His D minor string-quartet, the Chamber Symphony and the F sharp minor string-quartet successively work out his theories. Nevertheless, though his contrapuntal treatment plays havoc with consonance and he fiercely disowns common emotion, his new expressionism cannot wholly prevent imaginative expansiveness. The F sharp minor quartet, which in its last two movements introduces a solo voice and Stefan George's words, still shows traces of beauty in the earlier style, often with compelling effect.

Schönberg has hitherto not quite succeeded in adapting his new expressionist scheme — "a transvaluation of all values" as he intended it to be—to chamber-music. His imagination, in conflict with all previous musical experience including a powerful sense of consonance, has not been able to force the work through, and Expressionism has not yet given us a great form based upon a new *melos*. The powerful tendency to expansiveness in music appears too strong for it. Since these works Schönberg has tried no new experiments in the great forms and seeks to prove his theories in short pieces.

True Expressionism, like most new movements in music,

arose on the keyboard. Three pianoforte pieces (Op. 11) created a tremendous sensation. They sprang from a sense of sound distorted by theoretical expressionism, and they are almost agonised attempts to give artistic form to the reality behind appearances. There is nothing comparable with them in ancient or modern pianoforte music. Schönberg composed five orchestral pieces in the same spirit. The third is particularly noteworthy. It rivals Impressionism in its fine shading, but every part in the score, according to the composer's intention, pursues its own course and attains a separate effect; no blending into a collective picture is allowed.

Schönberg, a law to himself and a slave to no musical instrument, soon saw the possibilities of the human voice for his purposes. Such songs as those of Op. 2 and 3 (which gave great promise of a new lyric style) were left far behind, and those in the new manner, whether with orchestra or pianoforte, show Schönberg's very individual *melos* and his independence of accompanying parts. The most curious are the *Pierrot Lunaire* cycle of poems, translated from the original of Albert Giraud by Otto Erich, for recitation to music. The tones of human speech are followed—a true speech-melody is discovered. It is unlike anything else which can be called music, but it is a unique and telling exposition of the grotesque folly which is its subject.

His dramatic experiments, *Erwartung* and *Die glückliche Hand*, are highly compressed and packed with meaning, a transmutation of light, colour and music itself into expressionism.

Arnold Schönberg is a master of atonality, an analyst of the elements of music and a transvaluer of the values of tune. He appears to most of his contemporaries as a nihilist or anarchist of the most fanatical type. As a matter of fact, the

evidence suggests that his art springs from an imagination injured and finally crippled by too much theory. There is a degree of compliance beyond which the ear refuses to go; moreover, Schönberg has not found it possible to be quite consistent to his own conception of a new form.

His greatness among his contemporaries consists in his having propounded such problems and made a bold step towards a solution. Others have indicated a crisis, but he has challenged all previous music. What of the future? His point of view is incompatible with any hope of bridging the gulf between vocal and instrumental music.

Schönberg's sincerity is exemplary and unquestioned. A passionate longing, which he seeks to rationalise, made him lay the foundations for a new house of art. His *Manual of Harmony* raised a storm, but is far less radical in doctrine than his music.

He is undoubtedly the most stimulating influence in the musical world at its present critical period.

CHAPTER XIII

WORLD MUSIC

General Characteristics

Strauss, Debussy and Schönberg stand out as great peaks from a range of lesser composers of all nationalities, a few of whom are yet notable in their several degrees for strongly individual qualities. The younger men amongst them carry our hopes for the future of music and their works deserve the most sympathetic consideration.

There is no disguising the fact that Richard Strauss has a very slender following among these younger men who are out of sympathy with his apparently reactionary attempts to construct a synthesis from insufficient material. They consider his later works old-fashioned under a veneer of modernist technique, and they believe that he has abandoned true progress for stereotyped routine and *bourgeois* complacency. Debussy, Schönberg and Stravinsky are nearer the ideals of these young composers, through a community of opinion on essentials which differs widely from that of Strauss. Debussy, it is true, interests them mainly as a stage upon the journey to Schönberg, who stands for the all-sufficiency of music as a non-representational spiritual entity, and for absolute freedom in the use of the artistic medium. The doctrine that every chord is admissible, that what was formerly admitted only as chromatic modulation should stand justified on its own merits, in short, that all previously established rules are questionable, and that the

raw material of music should be tested by its successful use as a means of expression alone, appeals to adventurous youth.

No form, however, can be fashioned without will, and the expression of will in music is rhythm. The Romantic movement weakened rhythm, and the Impressionistic movement tried to exclude it entirely; but rhythm was, is and shall be the motive principle in every strongly creative nature. It can and must survive under conditions of absolute time freedom. Rhythmic strength used with absolute freedom may be the basis of music in the future, the key which is to solve the problems of form: Stravinsky's work is constructed on such lines.

At all times of change—and particularly in these days when everything is questioned and the obligations to the past are insufficiently recognised—the technique of art, rooted as it is in experience and in precepts derived therefrom, is hotly contested, the artist taking his stand on personal impulse to expression as his sole law. Uncertainty as regards technique naturally favours irresponsible dilettantism, despite the shining example of Schönberg, undisputed leader of the moderns, who has the root of the older technique within him, though he does not allow himself to be bound by it. A too alert self-consciousness in the age has borne its natural fruit in a crowd of *poseurs* and would-be visionaries straining after startling effects. Each has his peculiar recipe and all deviations from nature pass for originality. The type is to be met everywhere, but is particularly rife in Germany, where only a very thorough masquerade can conceal innate *bourgeoisie*. In the world of painting, many a blundering fool has imitated Van Gogh's wild irregularities readily enough, and it is the same in modern music. The genuine "moderns" are few, but they alone deserve our consideration. The critic has the difficult task of discovering the signs of true creative impulse and imaginative power in a mass of work, various in type, yet all reaching a

high level of technical ability; it is like struggling through thick undergrowth towards a distant clearing.

It is not easy to preserve one's sense of direction in the midst of apparently chaotic and frequently ill-considered experiments, many of them inspired by nothing more promising than a morbid dread of the commonplace.

Germany has been isolated from the rest of the world, and new groups have been formed, but her state of isolation is only temporary. Through their effect on the interchange of artistic commodities in the widest sense of the word, on international business relationships and on the interchange of ideas, politics influence art to-day and are likely to do so in the immediate future. The idea of nationality has changed and become an even stronger emotional force than the idea of race. When we have established the long-desired United States of Europe we may discover that it is susceptible of a further and more beneficial change.

In the meantime the antithesis between German and other music has been, secretly or openly, impressed on men's minds. Two things have conspired to shake the supremacy of German music—the deposition of the sonata-form which had attained its most powerful and persistent development in Germany, and the depreciation of the quality of "heart" (*Gemüt*), upon the supposition that it is a hindrance to art. Where *bourgeois* opinion prevails, this quality is bound up with piety, sentimentality and tradition, and is hostile to emotional and intellectual changes. *Sensibilité* as a main source of creative inspiration will never be understood in Germany.

For the moment this quality of heartfelt emotion (*Gemüt*)—the source of folk-song—is at a discount in all musically cultured countries. Nevertheless it is found impossible to exclude the

melodic idea by proscribing "melody" or going in quest of *melos*. In everything connected with folk-song, melody is to-day as obvious as ever and is still fruitful in the themes and *motiven* of more sophisticated music. *Melos* is the hidden force which gives life and movement to the musical organism. It has been the fashion to trace the inspiration of a work to all kinds of things—colour, for instance; but *melos* is the secret life of music and about it the storms of the present crisis are gathering. Even Schönberg, advanced as he is, has an inclination towards it, and through it he tends to find the centre of gravity once more in the soul.

Lack of simplicity—as shown in the modern incapacity for producing folk-song—has led to a general hunt after exotic melodies. The quality which musicians found formerly in Romanticism or the colour-sense, they now, in their search for a new basis, look for in the unfamiliar or exotic. By the "exotic" is to be understood the primitive artistic emotions of races outside Western civilisation. South-eastern Europe, particularly Rumania, may still be placed in this category, and from there the mind travels naturally towards India.

The determination to exclude all but essentials has led very generally to a new conception of the orchestra, a conception not yet strong enough to win a practical victory over the charm, the artistic satisfaction, of the present orchestra with its wonderful adaptability and capacity for expressing colour. Representational music, "tone-painting," is very far from dead and still keeps pace with the painter's art, or goes astray after Marinetti and results in sheer noise. On the whole, however, there is in orchestration a tendency towards restraint, an approach to the spirit of chamber-music.

Experiment is the order of the day; the powers of tonality and atonality are in conflict and little really finished work is resulting at present.

Delius as Mediator

Frederick Delius is a forerunner of the times. Formerly Germany was the giver in musical intercourse with England; now an English subject, born it is true of German parentage, has evolved from his inner consciousness a perfectly free and non-derivative type of music. Delius has little natural talent for design, and grasp of the sonata-form is neither innate nor cultivated in him. He is not essentially a musician by temperament but has a mind capable of assimilating the best in any culture and chooses to express reality in the language of music. His idiom is not easy to define; it is dreamy and elusive, according with a spiritual conception derived from a high civilisation and a natural inclination for solitude.

Delius went to Florida as a planter, but later settled in the neighbourhood of Paris. Genuine exotic colour and an intellectual conception of art inspire his work. He is happier dealing with a musical score than with his fellow-men, more especially when these form themselves into *cliques*. The Impressionist style of the period was his by nature, although he knew little of the atmosphere of the schools apart from a very slight connection with the Leipzig Conservatorium. Nevertheless his German heritage is faintly traceable in the music-drama *Koanga* and in the orchestral and choral work *Appalachia*, both of which bear the impress of his "Wanderjahre," and in the glimmering emotional night-piece, *Paris*, which seems to conjure up a city of light from the dusk to let it fade into the dusk again. The quality of "heart" (*Gemüt*) is mingled in him with *sensibilité*, and he is drawn irresistibly to interpret the idyllic in terms of music. *A Village Romeo and Juliet* was founded on Gottfried Keller's novel; *Fennimore and Gerda* on Jens Peter Jacobsen's book *Niels Lyhne*. He is a musician who is not far from being a poet; he can neither write nor

compose great music-drama or opera, but he manages to suggest an emotional situation with great tenderness and truth. This quality of truthfulness is inherent in Delius. He shuns violent effects, but the dream scene in *A Village Romeo and Juliet* has a power of its own which justifies its claim to the stage.

Delius is charming, impressionistic and by nature a perpetual exile, withdrawn from the affairs of mankind, and if his work has limitations they arise out of his need of constant external stimuli, whether in the form of scenery, pictures, poetry or philosophy. This, however, in its turn prevents his work from becoming mechanical, and provides room for the expression of a personality at once cultured and devoted to nature, and for work of a type that does real service in drawing nationalities together.

Delius's connection with Debussyism is obvious; he occasionally echoes *Siegfried* and *Tristan*; the charm of the unfamiliar adds to the attraction of his colouring, but his technique is nevertheless individual and characterised by disregard of symmetry. His treatment of *motiv* is graphic and superimposed. Picturesque motives assemble and re-assemble and incorporate themselves in the tune. A virtue is made of rhythmic weakness; harmony, freed from rules, is gathered up in sweet sounds; but the work leaves a faint suggestion of overstrain and undue length, since sentimental work is frequently diffuse.

The reasons for Delius's lack of marked success as a composer of opera are easy to understand. He does not give the singers their due; and despite, or because of his *sensibilité*, has always been rather a sympathetic observer of the stage than a man capable of dominating it.

When *In a Summer Garden* weaves for us its magic web of sound, when, in *On hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*, we breathe the very scents of the northern country-side, or when

The Mass of Life (too seldom performed) reveals its remarkable combination of originality with tradition, then we realise Delius's individual and tranquil quality in an age of strife and hurry.

England

The condition of music in England has recently undergone a great change. Till the beginning of the present century, England was an unhesitating borrower from Germany in matters musical, and she submitted to Germany's undisputed musical hegemony the more readily in that she had herself contributed nothing of great value to the art for the preceding three hundred years. It is true that throughout that period a certain delicate musical culture, a choral tradition, had flourished modestly in the shadow of the great churches and universities; but it had produced no great English work. English sentimentalism welcomed German romanticism and, despite the recognition of Strauss's instrumental genius in England, his popularity with the mass of the musical public, led by Thomas Beecham, was due to the sentimental element in most of his songs.

It must be remembered that music, even to-day, plays a very small part in the life of the average Englishman, whose demands are satisfied by the music-hall song; even that spirit of inoffensive jollity which pervades the *Beggar's Opera* is in itself a hindrance to the development of more serious music. Nevertheless the work done in England towards building up a musical public is not to be despised and the hitherto uneducated masses must be reckoned with as a future factor in music. The upper classes offer more active opposition to serious music by their refusal to allow music to interfere with their pleasures. They do not want style and consistency in the arrangement of the concert-programme,

but brightness and plenty of variety; and this is what they get even in the big subscription concerts. Certain musicians, however, are regarded as "patentees" in some particular branch of their art—it must be admitted that such patents are not easily obtained—and then become the objects of a personal cult which frequently has little to do with music.

Music in general, and modern music in particular, is making undoubted progress in England; but here even less than elsewhere is it in any sense a popular movement. Moreover the most promising beginnings of British music can still be traced to foreign influences, many of a political kind, and the "new music" in England has as little real independence as the old; the source of inspiration is sought no longer in German, but in Russian and French music. The war stopped the flow from Germany: France, Italy, Russia, England and America constituted impenetrable barriers. Richard Wagner still maintained a scarcely acknowledged sway in all these countries, but everything new was welcomed as anti-German, and at this favourable moment, Mussorgsky, who obtained a hearing in England, France and Italy very shortly before the war, created a strong impression, while Stravinsky became a dominating influence. For a long time Schönberg was denied even a hearing in the countries of the Entente, but apart from this he was not the man to counteract the Franco-Russian influence, Western Europe considering his earlier work too romantic and his later work so much waste-paper.

The stream of anti-German music flowed into England unchecked, the more so that England, through its trade connections with America, was found by the professional artist to give easy access to that country. In this way even music became a means of political propaganda. Such matters, however, have only a relative bearing. Artistic development can be retarded, but not entirely checked, by outward events; it is too deeply rooted in human necessity.

There is no doubt that long before the 1914–18 war, Debussy's influence predominated among the younger musicians. It was part of a reaction against what was considered "nineteenth-century" and "out-of-date" in German academic music. Cyril Scott, who has been called the "English Debussy" although he studied in Germany, exemplifies this attitude. Ravel was then "discovered" and about the same time, partly owing to the war, the Russians, with the Parisian Stravinsky at their head.

When we come to consider the positive result of English composition during the last decade, we feel that the burden of "great" music must have been discarded with a sigh of relief. Post-Debussyism, the new French and Franco-Russian schools, had exploded simplicity, and English composers like Eugene Goossens, Lord Berners and Arthur Bliss gave themselves up readily to the new influences. In the art of parody, England has achieved some really original work. Arthur Bliss has something to say and in his *Conversations* and *Rout* (works of a definitely new English character though owing some part of their inspiration to Stravinsky) he says it with grace and provides good entertainment. His *Colour Symphony* proved too much for his powers; it lacks life and individuality and is distinctly reactionary. His talent is for parody in which he surpasses both Lord Berners, a witty composer who, in a series of small pianoforte pieces, makes a virtue of his lack of deep musicianship, and Eugene Goossens, who began as a promising Debussyist and showed great dexterity in chamber-music but is too adroit to become really great. Goossens' style has more distinction in a short caricature like *Jack o' Lantern* than in longer works. There is a tradition of "innocent merriment" in English music of which the Gilbert and Sullivan operas are the classical expression. It brought about the recent successful revival of the *Beggar's Opera*, and forms an integral part of modern English

Arnold Bax

work in which wit and humour are more pointed than ever. The English composer does not grapple with big musical problems but is quick to borrow what best supports his natural talent for parody from foreign schools of music.

The influence of modern music in England has been striking, but it has not spread beyond a certain small circle of composers and their adherents. In so far as it has been a real advance it has not been wasted, but if English music is ever to become truly individual and independent it must seek other sources. This has already been indicated by one of the older composers, Ralph Vaughan-Williams, who, ignoring the progressives, has returned to English folk-tune and combined it in masterly fashion with Impressionism. His *London Symphony* is a model of symphonic development. It reflects the very fogs of London, and possesses a solemnity characteristic of the man. The same may be said of his Mass in G minor. Edward Elgar, senior English composer, is another witness to the connection between the best musicians and folk-music. Vaughan-Williams and Elgar are both deeply learned in their art. Such learning is sedulously cultivated in England, which possesses two important schools of music in the Royal Academy and the Royal College of Music.

There are very varied types among English composers. Arnold Bax has nothing at all in common with the young parodists. He is naturally serious and, although he seeks inspiration in Russian music, he remains a typical Englishman. His work is not outwardly brilliant or provocative, but it possesses the depth and reserve of the English type. It is romantic, non-sensuous and based on good technique. His sonatas, choral works, orchestral pieces, a symphony and many songs are distinguished and genuine achievements.

Gustav Holst, of Swedish extraction, though the family has long been settled in England, is a composer of very different temperament. His work will probably outlive that

of others of the new English school. His *Planets*, which brought him fame, is not, indeed, great music. The theme touches on metaphysics and a Russian influence is perceptible, but English mobility gives it distinction and it shows a fine sense of form; each part of the work is a finished product. With such a temperament, Holst naturally turned to opera and composed *The Perfect Fool* and *Savitri*. The first is a very delightful example of parody on the big scale, a unique venture of its kind. It is easy to understand the exaggerated enthusiasm with which Holst has been greeted as creator of a new English opera, for England has hitherto accomplished little in this branch of music. Rutland Boughton, composer of *The Immortal Hour*, a blend of Wagnerism and Irish folk-song, has not the makings of a great musician, but it is clear that henceforward a permanent British National Opera could be established.

The old German-English tradition is still carried on by Dame Ethel Smyth and also by John Ireland, Frank Bridge and Joseph Holbrooke, whose work lacks individual character.

These varied musical activities show that French influences alone cannot determine the direction of the new music and that folk-tune will undoubtedly play a part in the future. It is a mistake to expect it to affect instrumental music immediately, but, developed in vocal music, it will eventually prove a strong counter-influence to Continental music. The English song, with its easy and graceful swing, is beginning to re-appear in the work of Roger Quilter and Martin Shaw, and vocal music is also promoted by a unique development of choral societies and such choirs as the Glasgow Orpheus. British music has Scottish, Welsh and Irish folk-song to draw upon, while the madrigal tradition and the Purcell spirit are as yet by no means exhausted.

The Englishman, when aware of his inhibitions, tends to mistrust his own art and fully realises that no great music

can spring up in a conventional social atmosphere; but his self-confidence is growing and in critical acumen he is in no way behind his Continental contemporaries. Among English conductors, Sir Henry Wood is a doughty champion of novelty and does much to promote general interest and participation in new music. A certain sentimental devotion to the past retards, but cannot prevent, English musical development.

There is much to be hoped for from the *British Music Society*, founded by Dr. Eaglefield-Hull in 1918, which is also the centre of an *International Society for Contemporary Music*, founded in 1922, which helps to co-ordinate the activities of actual participators in musical development, and so further the cause of modern music. It was a remarkable act of faith which made London the headquarters of the International Society and Edward J. Dent, the English musical researcher, its chairman. English musical science maintains, and more than maintains, its place in the modern world.

France

Debussy died, leaving the world a music limited yet perfect of its kind, and Ravel was left without a rival in France, his personality contrasting strongly with his environment. His development and creative vigour have not ceased, and it is becoming increasingly apparent that he has nothing in common either with Debussy or with the extreme moderns among the younger men.

Ravel is not content to remain in the experimental stage; he wants to attain new form, to achieve a real masterpiece. His interest in colour is declining and he has undoubtedly felt the influence of Schönberg, whom he greatly admires, and of Stravinsky. He is striving to express the clarity and simplicity which are essential traits in his own nature. A sonata for violin

and 'cello is the best example of Ravel's later manner; here sound and content are perfectly matched and a spiritual conception finds most delicate and restrained material expression through the medium of a couple of stringed instruments.

The general acceptation of Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps* as the greatest work of the day has somewhat restricted the range of the younger French composers. Its dimensions dwarf other work by comparison and exercise a depressing effect. Nevertheless the last ten years have probably seen more work produced by young men between twenty and thirty years of age than has any previous decade. They have neither leisure nor inclination to work in the great musical forms and therefore attribute an exaggerated importance to the kind of music which avoids length.

Of all European cities, Paris has surrendered most completely to the chaotic manner of life typified by jazz music and the American bar. The nigger is hailed as the saviour of music and syncopated rhythm is the correct Parisian mode. There is no doubt that this should be a real contribution to music, but at present it is bound up with so very superficial an outlook on art that it appears to do more harm than good. Paris has accepted parody, irony and mockery in music and has rejected everything deeper and more purposeful; a great art has become a mere pastime.

A group of young composers, originally calling themselves "The Six," with Eric Satie as president, for long represented an independent movement in music. Among its members, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud and Francis Poulenc have won general recognition; but they have done so by freeing themselves from the *clique* spirit which stamps the work of their fellows with a family likeness. Honegger, a Swiss by birth, has an acute sense of form and is therefore not in the least typical of the younger French schools, for whose taste he has too much learning and too little superficiality. He is,

however, undoubtedly destined to develop and practises various branches of his art from the sonata to the oratorio, his *King David* being a curiosity in modern music. Stravinsky clearly influences him, without weakening his sense of form, which is dynamic rather than static, as exemplified in a *scherzo*, the *Pacific*, 231 (the name of a well-known P.L.M. express train). This is actually programme-music revived, as is also Poulenc's pianoforte piece, *Promenades*, which is an attempt to depict the ceaseless motion of a crowd.

It is not astonishing that this group is interested in musical revue and the ballet, the most original composer of ballet-music among the younger men being Milhaud.

Roland Manuel attempts a delicate synthesis of ancient and modern material, a kind of Neo-classicism.

French musical activity at present is undoubtedly stimulating, but its achievements must not be over-valued; and although the general interest in music is greater than hitherto, the middle-class public still clings to Schumann and Wagner. Music in France is a form of intellectual entertainment and, on this account, extreme modernism gets a hearing more easily than in other countries. True musical development is, however, neither helped nor hindered by the applause of the intellectual snob, nor by the indifference of the *bourgeoisie*.

Italy

There is a remarkable revival of creative activity in Italy. In that country, musical enterprise has always been unorganised, the public being quite satisfied with the prettiness of *bel-canto*; but there is now a demand for improvement, combined with a determination not to remain content with the crumbs of German music doled out by foreign conductors or even by Toscanini, but to revive the great traditions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and to evolve a new

symphonic culture. Torrefranca's learning has helped to unlock the treasures of the past, but an artist is needed to give them the breath of life. We have already had occasion to refer to Ottorino Respighi, a symphonic composer of the Roman Academy; he is the very man to cultivate the grand style, to act as ambassador of modernism to his country.

The desire for a new Italian symphonic form which shall possess a transparent and expressive polyphony, conceived in terms of the voice, is blocked by the spirit of that new art which Italy shares with France. In Italy, the very home of sensuous trivialities, there is moreover a fight to be fought out with the great public. The average Italian, with his robust sensuousness, who regarded Parisian impressionism, "art for art's sake" and musical sensibility, with some hostility, takes *futurismo* as a definite declaration of war on his healthy (all too healthy!) musical appetite.

The artistic alliance of France and Italy—long existing in the realm of painting—was extended to music, chiefly through the influence of Pratella, followed by that of Alfredo Casella, a native of Turin who easily adapted himself to Parisian life and ways, and was influenced by Debussy's circle. He carries the apparently emotionless polish with which he plays Debussy's music into all his creative work. He has a calculating quality which is the reverse of sentimental, and as an assured and accomplished man of the world he is able to express wit and a sense of the grotesque with great effect. His *Pupazzetti* for the pianoforte (later arranged for a small orchestra) is a masterly example of his power in this direction. He is the most able of modern Italian composers from the technical point of view; and until the war, he adhered to the school of Debussy, modified by a love of Mahler, whose advocate he was in Paris and whose festival, held after the war at Amsterdam, he honoured by his presence. Even in those works which he created under the spell of Mahler's intense personality there

was a trace of something which re-appears in *A notte alta* and *Notte di maggio*, a genuine, unaffected quality which gives promise of better things to come. It is to be hoped that mechanical modernism and calculated virtuosity will gradually disappear from his work. Casella's mind is free from prejudice, but he is determined to be absolutely Italian. He has felt Stravinsky's influence strongly, but he has equally strong leanings to Neo-classicism. A symphonic rhapsody *Italia* and the *Elegia eroica* are expressions—though not yet perfect expressions—of this attitude, which is becoming increasingly marked in his work. He is at his best in his quartets.

Francesco Malipiero, Ildebrando Pizzetti and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco are other members of a group which repudiates both the general level of musical opinion in Italy and also that section which thinks in terms of the German symphony.

The Venetian Malipiero uses his fertile imagination to make war upon the endless banalities of *bel-canto*; his experiment, *Sette Canzoni*, is by way of a challenge to lyrical opera, but it by no means exhausts his capacities. In pure music his impulse is to discard all previous models and to strive for expression of essentials. Though he studied under the classical Enrico Bossi, his mind is non-academic, and he has never really mastered the patterns of symmetrical music. Expressionism dominates his *motiv*. Starting from the short *motiv*, he tends towards linear development without achieving what is called a "great" form. Neither his symphonic works, *Impressioni dal Vero* and *Pause del Silenzio*, nor his string quartet with its clever modernisation of folk-tune, are continuously developed. Malipiero is not a composer of the first rank; but, underlying the echoes of French impressionism, a trend to true Italian music, with its refined folk-song, is discernible. In such pianoforte pieces as the *Poemi asolani* and *Barlumi* and in songs, Malipiero is groping towards a new form of melodic expression.

Ildebrando Pizzetti, director of the Florentine Conservatoire, serious and poetic by nature, is a strongly personal, and at the same time a strikingly Italian, embodiment of modern thought. He is a friend of D'Annunzio and a keen critic of all branches of modern music and with him the talk about a connection with Monteverdi ceases to be a phrase. His *Fedra* on D'Annunzio's text follows the drama very closely and relies considerably on the human voice, while in *Deborah and Jael* he has grappled with the problem of expressing drama in music. It is music-drama of a new kind, serious and genuinely emotional, and proves his unlikeness not only to the pleasure-loving Italian musical public, but also to the other composers of his country. He has done original work in chamber-music, and his A minor sonata for violin and piano, remarkable for purity of conception and of style, and possessing an individual non-academic form in accordance with its spiritual content, is a triumph of modernism reinforced by the study of three centuries of Italian art. It portrays the Tuscan country-side; violin and piano contribute equally to the expression, though they do not follow each other in the customary interchange of speech. The *Preghiera degli Innocenti* in the middle movement is primitive Italian song in all its purity. There is no such thing as an unsolved problem in Pizzetti's work; all between-tones and separated sounds are simple harmony to him.

It is not surprising that such a teacher as Pizzetti exercises a powerful influence on his pupils, the more so as he gives them of his best without any attempt to coerce their judgment. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, now in his thirtieth year, is the most promising of these disciples. He shares Pizzetti's interest in poetry and his desire to Italianise his art, but his style is very different. He is equally inspired by the Spanish text of *Coplas* and the Italian *Stelle cadenti*. There are signs of a divided mind in the handling of his themes, an attempt to

escape from Parisian influence, a transition from impressionism to firm outline. Like Pizzetti, Castelnuovo-Tedesco is unmistakably sincere and devoted to his art.

In 1914, at the *Salle des Agriculieurs* in Paris, these composers of the modern Italian school issued a manifesto of Latin art; the war confirmed them in this musical-political creed, but as Italians they seek recognition also in the non-Latin world.

Respighi does not belong to this group. His music rests on a firm basis of knowledge and ability, but he has assimilated much from the Impressionist movement, while Riccardo Zandonai, composer of the opera *Francesca da Rimini* and of a very workmanlike violin concerto, by no means rejects the influence of the various European schools of thought. Zandonai, however, though outside the combative Italian group, is none the less unmistakably Italian; and the same may be said of Leone Sinigaglia, whose work is rooted in Piedmontese folk-song; of Domenico Alaleona, well-informed and smoothly melodious; of Gasco, de Sabata, Setaccioli and Santoliquido. After the Italian fashion, they are, for the most part, facile rather than profound.

Musical activity in Italy is at the moment somewhat one-sided; the dictatorship of a single group, a *clique* after the Parisian fashion, is too much in evidence; nevertheless signs are not wanting of the emergence of an art at once Italian and universal. It will receive a ready welcome from the cultured public the world over.

Other European Countries

Many of the remaining European countries are much preoccupied at present with their new-found nationalism.

The Czechs have entered upon the heritage of the Bohemians, but political and racial boundaries are not coincident, and

present-day Czecho-Slovakia, which comprises many Germans, can hardly be regarded as a unity. It is therefore impossible to speak of Czech music. The music of those parts is pronouncedly Bohemian, and it probably found a more powerful and individual expression before the political ideals of the Czechs were realised than it can find to-day. Smetana embodies the racial spirit and is regarded as the father of the new Czech music; but of this we have as yet scarcely a trace. An older generation of composers remains, with a strong sense of attachment to the soil, and of these the best is Leos Janáček, aggressively independent, unsentimental and determined that his native tunes shall play a part in European music. His operas such as *Jeji Pastorkyňa* (*Her Stepdaughter*) and the less admirable *Katja Kabanova* are his most characteristic works. He gives us peasant-drama and peasant passions; but his theme shows inflexible individuality and most delicate craftsmanship. His choruses breathe the very spirit of the country-side. Joseph Suk resembles Janáček, though he is far more adaptable. He acquired a keen ear and a feeling for the possibilities of string instruments as second violinist in the Bohemian String Quartet. He is an innate musician with the instinct to refine and perfect his art. He develops his theme smoothly and does not employ the abbreviations typical of so much modern music; on the contrary, his music is diffuse and full of melodious sweetness. He is at his best in chamber-music and symphonies, a symphonic poem *Zrani* (*The Ripening*) being his masterpiece hitherto.

Compared with these two composers, Vitězslav Novák has diverged from the racial type and his chamber and orchestral music is mid-European. A number of younger composers possess mixed characteristics, even Romanticism surviving among them; but the general trend towards France has as yet produced no great results. There is much chamber-music and many songs, but little orchestral work. Křička's children's

songs and songs of humour are genuinely original, while Vomáčka, Jirák and Vycpálek, the latter obstinately contrapuntal, are coming to the fore. The situation awaits developments. A national music is being feverishly cultivated, the earnestness and energy which go to the work being a heritage of the past.

In Hungary there is a yet wider gap between the few leading spirits and the average composer. Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály differ greatly from each other; both have outgrown the purely Hungarian and now belong to that small circle which is revolutionising the music of the world. Bartók is the more thorough-going revolutionary of the two. He was long regarded as a Schönbergian, but it is now generally admitted that he has achieved his results independently through exact and critical observation. He has abandoned traditional methods, but his interest in the fruitful study of folk-lore has kept him in touch with primitive emotion. He may claim that he has never bowed the knee to the gods of sensationalism and he is undoubtedly one of the most genuine and most powerful of the moderns. He takes his art very seriously and demands a like attitude in his audience. Bartók's music diverges widely from the beaten track and is bound to be received as a hard saying by many. There is nothing flattering about it, nothing Southern or Latin, and it does not rely on the persuasions of tune; nevertheless even an unsympathetic hearer must feel that it is the work of a master musician and a man of character. He early abandoned clearly defined tonality, but the sonata-form with thematic work is still perceptible in his chamber-music, while his treatment of part-writing and harmony shows that he has no doubts as to the end in view, original as are his means to that end. His work has great intellectual force, born of solitude and intense concentra-

tion. He is most himself in a somewhat gruff humour which his staccato rhythm and perverse harmony render arresting and convincing. His lyrical work is more difficult, his idiosyncrasy preventing the normal linking of emotion with sweet sound; but, even apart from this, it is doubtful if he has any strong lyrical impulse. He is drawn more strongly to those aspects of music where intellect checks the free flow of imagination. Nevertheless he believes that music is straying too far from its origin, that it is becoming over-civilised, and on that account he has been a persistent collector of folk-song on many journeys in the Balkans and the East. He collects and arranges, but cannot originate, folk-music. It is a thing of sunshine and brightness and it withers under Bartók's intellectualism; something perverse in his nature mingles with the dance, giving a misplaced suggestion of bitterness, and his work serves to emphasise the contrast between folk-music and intellectual modernism. Two string quartets, two sonatas for violin and piano, and numerous pianoforte pieces are typical of Bartók, but his orchestral work is less characteristic. His later work is somewhat bloodless and is too clearly the product of a brain labouring with abstractions. The more sensuous side of his nature is expressed in occasional work for the stage and the ballet.

Sensuous feeling for music is more highly developed in Bartók's companion-in-arms, Kodály, who is also nearer the average Hungarian in sentiment. He derives his inspiration from instrumental tone and although his trend is entirely modern he never loses himself in cold theorising; his faults are rather those of superficiality. In his sonata for 'cello alone he has used all the resources of virtuosity to achieve a new effect and has produced a work unique of its kind.

In Finland the star of Jean Sibelius is in the ascendant.

He is preoccupied with Western Impressionism which colours his graphic, lyrical and very national music and prevents him from doing great symphonic work. His Fifth Symphony is retrogressive, yet it contains hints of a new form, while his violin concerto in D minor is a powerful work of its kind. Selim Palmgren, a fellow-countryman of Sibelius, is known chiefly for a colouristic pianoforte concerto, *The River*, and Yrjö Kilpinen's delicately lyrical work is beginning to attract attention.

Denmark used to rely on Germany for its music, but now boasts a new master in Karl Nielsen, an independent and moderate composer of the modern school.

Grieg exhausted the possibilities of Norwegian folk-music and made a real though not a weighty contribution to world music from racial sources, and Norway now seeks to establish a music of its own. Sweden, on the contrary, is inclined by racial characteristics to music of the German type and is averse to experiment. Of Swedish composers, Kurt Atterberg has a happy temperament and a musicianly ear, qualities which have given distinction to his symphonies and concertos; Wilhelm Stenhammar has failed to fulfil his early promise and the work of Ture Rangström is definitely Northern in character. Lack of tradition and a general spirit of dilettantism make the musical future of Scandinavia very uncertain. At present, Northern music seems unable to find a way into the great European stream; Finnish music only has so far achieved this without loss of individual colour.

Holland, the land of painters, has but a short musical history, and indeed musical enthusiasm is scarcely compatible with the placid and even tenor of *bourgeois* life as it has long existed in that country. Both Verhulst, of the romantic school, and Julius Röntgen turned to Germany. Viotta made Wagner

known in Holland, while Willem Mengelberg, a past-master of orchestral technique, made of the *Conzertgebouw Orchestra* an instrument meet for the amazing cult of Mahler which recently prevailed in Holland. The Mahler Festival in the spring of 1920 was a great technical triumph in Mahler's cause.

Holland is a small country, the people are not naturally musical, and the flood of foreign music which has poured in upon it during the last century from neighbouring countries has not been an unmixed blessing to the cause of Dutch music. For a short time, Max Reger made something of a sensation among Dutch musicians, but they now look to the West rather than to Germany for inspiration and guidance. Richard Strauss still draws large audiences, but the latest developments of French music have as great—if not a greater—influence on Dutch composers as anything which is being done in Germany. Johann Wagenaar and Cornelis Dopper have a fund of healthy realism which exactly expresses the practical quality of their race. Dopper's Sixth Symphony portrays a public holiday in Amsterdam with rude strength and is greatly disliked by those who regard symphony as consecrated to high and exalted subjects only. Dopper possesses a bluff humour which inclines him to the suite, but he can be almost academic, as in *Ciaccona Gotika* (*Gothic Chaconne*). Willem Pijper is the most advanced, the most daring and also the most Western of modern Dutch composers.

Poland, in the pride of its new political status, is anxious to reburnish its ancient glories, but it has been even less successful in the attempt to be original than the other recently constituted states of Europe. Karol Szymanowski is entirely European and modern, a virtuoso in tone; he is

more original in his songs than in his numerous instrumental works. Ludomir Różycki, composer of *Eros and Psyche*, is more interesting in opera than in his other works, many of which are entirely insignificant.

Until recently, music in Spain was unconnected with business interests of any kind and the musical culture of Germany was practically unknown there. Spanish musicians studied in Paris and Parisian musicians visited Spain as a happy hunting-ground of exotic and folk music. Emmanuel Chabrier absorbed its glowing colours, Charles Bordes studied Basque melodies, and Debussy caught the very spirit of the Spanish country-side. The increasing influence of French Impressionism is apparent in such Spanish composers as Isaac Albeniz and Enrique Granados, but the difficulty of making artistic use of Spanish folk-song is clear. Either song and dance are so overpowering as to give Spanish music the stamp of the drawing-room ballad, or else the Spanish composer adopts the culture of middle Europe entirely and eradicates almost every trace of his national melodies from his work. The *Goyescas*, a pianoforte work of Enrique Granados, who fell in the Great War, shows the limitations enforced by a blend of peasant art and Romanticism. The Spanish spirit has up to the present found its most attractive and most universal expression in the work of Manuel de Falla, a composer familiar with both France and England, though even he has not been able entirely to overcome the provincialism of Spanish music. He represents the collective achievement of Spain up to the present. Pablo Casals, of world-wide renown as a violoncellist and student of music, and Joan Manén, a violinist of culture, are actively promoting the musical education of their country.

The same is being done for Rumania by George Enescu, a musician of varied talents.

The above survey shows how great is the preponderance of Parisian influence among the smaller states of Europe.

Germany and Austria

Germany's part is a curious one. The waves of the Musical *Entente* seethe about her, but her increasing isolation does not appear to trouble her. Germany has always been called the land of music and in Berlin the values of artists, composers and their works has long been estimated by a criticism in the main very able and pertinent. Berlin is not indeed in itself artistically fertile, but it has offered an inexhaustible field for the enterprise of musicians from all over Germany, more especially from the distant South, offering them every advantage of skilfully organised publicity. Such organisation has resulted in the creation of many centres of public musical culture; but of these, Berlin is the chief. Any danger of this cult stiffening into formalism is obviated by the constant infusion of fresh blood from the musically-disposed peoples of Austria. The situation is thus generally summed up in Germany, and German opinion on such a subject has weight.

The re-grouping of the musical world has had certain curious results. An amalgamation of art and politics is in itself an exceedingly inartistic affair, nor can the interference of political and business interests with the public and business side of music very seriously affect its inward development; but there are nevertheless certain serious consequences arising from Germany's isolation in Europe. In Germany, the majority of the middle classes still cleave to the ideals of romantic classicism in music, a habit of mind unduly encouraged by the profession; but outside Germany, where

tradition holds little or no sway, new developments are for the most part hailed as final and authoritative, and academic music and sentimentalism are alike at a discount, despite the opposition of the *bourgeois* element to novelty which is alike in all countries. Owing to Germany's widespread musical culture, her amazing wealth of good conductors, *bourgeois* opinion is stronger and more self-reliant there than elsewhere, and thus what is in itself a virtue becomes a source of limitation. The forces of conservatism are, however, opposed by a minority of composers whose modernity is not a question of fashion but of passionate conviction as to the need of new forms of expression in music.

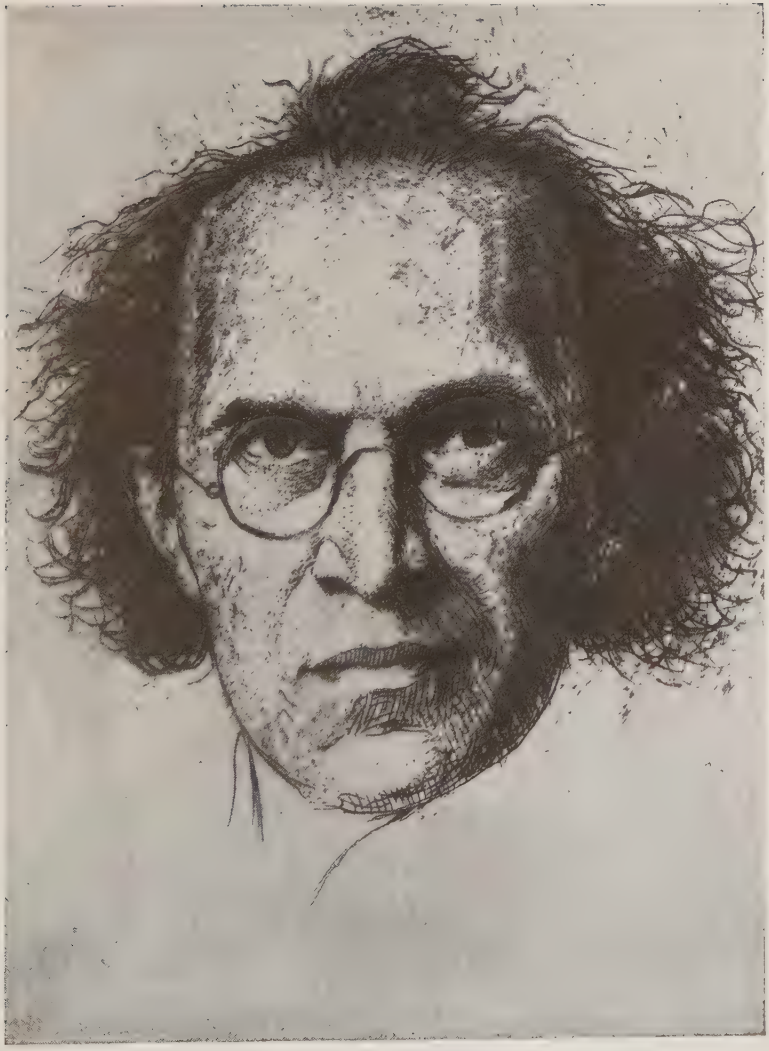
German public music is accused, not without foundation, of being behind the times; but there, even more than elsewhere, revolutionary composers and artists are out of touch with the general music-loving public and are on that account the more extreme in their opinions. They are provoked by an attitude of mind which rests complacently in the vested rights of the past and will not trouble to enquire whether present-day developments ratify them. Thoughtful experimental modern music in Germany has even less hope of a hearing from the masses, amongst whom there are yet greater obstacles to the understanding of the great German music of the future. In Germany, as elsewhere, a crowd of "hangers-on" of the new school conceal feeble dilettantism beneath a cloak of extreme modernism.

Other countries have given the world brilliant though not deep examples of modern music; but modernism in Germany appears in a bastard form, the academic strain not having been entirely eliminated.

German musical organisation forms a convenient frame for the display of the abundant and frequently wastefully

employed musical talent of that favoured city, Vienna, a city, moreover, whose humane and easy-going inhabitants have managed to maintain relations with the outer world through times of international stress. Here, where Makart and the dance are ruling artistic influences, Franz Schmidt, a born musician, composes superabundantly musical symphonies and such operas as *Notre Dame*, while a young composer, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, reproduces the prevailing hot-house atmosphere in his work. Korngold possesses a happy blend of innate musicianship and theatrical *flair* and is not to be dismissed as a merely eclectic composer. Like a true Viennese he cannot resist an easy bid for popularity, and this hinders him from doing really original work. He has abundant musical resources but no taste, and his work needs selection and pruning. Under the influence of Strauss and Puccini he frequently degenerates into operetta, but he has matured early, acquiring with ease and speed technical accomplishments which are the reward of much toil to others. His sensuous imagination makes up for the want of a lifetime of experience. *Der Schneeman* was followed by the over-heated *Violanta*, *Der Ring des Polycrates* (in the manner of the *Rosenkavalier*), and finally by *Die Tote Stadt*, which translates Georges Rodenbach's highly symbolic *Bruges la morte* into the very unsymbolic atmosphere of orchestral and vocal "staginess." We pass over his chamber and symphonic music which is frequently turgid, though it shows a lively fancy.

Vienna acquired Richard Strauss as director of the State Opera, while presenting Berlin with Franz Schreker. It would be hard to find a pair more unlike. Schreker has perhaps done his best work as a particularly inspiring teacher, leading his pupils away from the beaten track of tradition to face present-day problems, yet leaving them free to follow or reject his own precepts. As director of the Berlin Academical High School of Music, he has opened up fresh possibilities for an



FRANZ SCHREKER
(After an etching by H. Gottselig)

institution which had become in course of time a bulwark of honourable but somewhat decrepit art. His close connection with the stage has, however, gradually encroached upon his teaching work; he is certainly the first open devotee of opera to rule the Berlin Academy.

Schreker has surprised the world with a number of operas and a chamber symphony, a most interesting and effective amalgam of Wagner, Puccini and Impressionism, with a Viennese tang. If the lasting worth of any work depends on strength and its musical counterpart, rhythm, Schreker's work will hardly achieve immortality. He stands out among contemporary composers, and all the weaknesses of the period find an echo in his work. He aims at line but is under the spell of colour, and in many ways incarnates the present era of transition. Eroticism lies at the basis of his work, a half-repressed and crippled eroticism. Other elements are the composer's stress on colour, his attempts to allegorise tone, his semi-philosophical trend combined with decided *naïveté*. Taken all in all his work is a most arresting blend of old and new, of delicacy and the glaringly obvious. His lack of originality is veiled by the striking form of his operas, but becomes apparent as he strives for a synthesis and for simplicity. He is at his best when he is least definite.

The theatre is Schreker's natural province. The chamber-music symphony, hitherto his single contribution to "pure music," is of interest as revealing a conflict of forces, but in his operas he expresses himself fully and there we see what stands between him and greatness. *Der Ferne Klang*, *Das Spielwerk und die Prinzessin*, *Die Gezeichneten*, *Der Schatzgräber*[1] began their successful career in the Frankfort Opera House. *Irrelohe*,[2] first produced in Cologne, is his first failure since his work became mature. It is not by chance that the French were the

[1] *The Distant Sound; The Princess and the Musical Box; The Branded; The Treasure-Seeker.*

[2] *Fitful Flames.*

first to take note of his work, for it is very Western in spirit. In its rich melody and expansiveness it is Viennese.

From Schönberg Schreker borrowed nothing, save a certain audacity in rhythmic experiments. He is definitely tonal, yet he plays with atonality. His work is significant in the present crisis, not for its strength but for its strange mixture of qualities.

Schönberg's most ardent following is in Vienna, where he achieved his first public success. He is regarded there as a moral force and has become a cult, almost a secret cult. His influence is not altogether favourable to music, for while he undoubtedly awakens the consciences of his followers and discourages dabblers in modernism, he is inclined to damp their creative ardour. When every step has to be deeply thought out, few steps are taken. This is illustrated in Anton von Webern, a highly gifted composer whose caution is increasing to the point of immobility. His "pieces for string quartet" aim at complete abstraction of sound and are frequently performed as a curiosity. Alban Berg, also an able and learned analyst of Schönberg's work, composes in a very discreet *tempo*. One of his string quartets is a masterly blend of *Tristan* and the doctrines of Schönberg, but opera seems to inspire him with fresh vitality and daring, and his operatic experiment, *Wozzeck*, is a new and interesting handling of the problems of this branch of music. Egon Wellesz began as a Schönbergian, but is developing originality, and from being a student of musical science, is becoming an increasingly happy composer of opera and ballet music.

There are many composers of the traditional schools in Austria at the present day, among whom E. Wilhelm Gross has notable facility.

The younger German composers are, on the whole, well grounded, very much in earnest and even philosophical, well

supplied with æsthetic "views" and determined to be original if not eccentric; but they have the defects of these qualities and lack certain essentials, particularly independence of the allurements of publicity, and freedom in the handling of their material. They are afraid of compelling passion, of the fire and colour of life. Modern critical and æsthetic theories have a part in all this, and music tends to lose its spontaneity between the rival admonishments of the business manager and the æsthetic critic. It is obvious that German musical activity has not declined, but there is a false impression abroad that the creative spirit in Germany has been crushed; whereas the fact is that German seriousness and pre-occupation with metaphysics in music is producing some very significant work amidst much that is dry and uninteresting. It is difficult at present to estimate the lasting qualities of much of the outwardly more brilliant work which is being done in non-German countries to-day; it depends on the turn of future development, but while it constantly seeks out fresh sonorities, German music steadily retains its individuality and pursues other and more distant ends. Its trend is away from the academic school and towards linear counterpoint, apart from which, according to certain theories based on Bach's music, there can be no salvation. It is undoubtedly the best means to purify music, but it needs to be vitalised by imagination; what was natural for Bach is not necessarily so for the present generation. Linear direction is defended in programme-music and it sharply opposes the free movement of independent parts at which it aims. As the bonds of tonality are loosed and cadence is discarded, it feels itself entirely free; but this alone can lead to nothing definite. In Germany the ideal of "absolute" music is actively upheld in opposition to literary and romantic influences; but "absolute" music runs the risk of barrenness unless it is nourished by a lively sense of tone and a humane philosophy.

Where Schönberg's crippling influence is not felt, the speedy production of some of the younger men is astonishing. The speediest and most tireless is Paul Hindemith, whose new and vital art became known through the musical festivals at Donaueschingen and Salzburg. His imagination is subject to no dogma. He feels the need of combining cultured and folk music, and while he avails himself of every modern musical conquest he never breaks away from musical origins. That is his strength. His weaknesses are irresponsibility and carelessness, and there is much worthless stuff in his compositions, the penalty of a too speedy rise to fame. He is the antithesis of the *bourgeois* type and, being a South German, his innate musical sense is above the average. He won his spurs as a violinist, viola-player and performer on some percussion instrument, and has been "the rage" at dancing-halls. He is at home in the cabaret and is a new musical type, taking part with zest in the carnival of life. He is like Stravinsky and his circle, in so far as he finds inspiration in modern chaotic conditions, in the mental and industrial uproar of his day. He is attuned to the rhythm of life and expresses it instinctively in his music; but he is essentially serious, though he adopts none of the outward signs of gravity.

A string quartet in C major, Op. 16, first brought him fame. His imagination transforms a normal construction and it is natural that, as a viola-player, he should have drawn his primal inspiration from the tone of his instrument. The quartet is the last and best of his purely musicianly works and was followed by an orgy of high-spirited experiment in all forms of chamber-music, ballet and opera, an erotic tendency becoming apparent. Hindemith is influenced though not dominated by his environment. He is sometimes inclined to philosophic speculation, but he is at his best when he is most primitive.

Ernst Křenek, born in Austria, but a student under Schreker

in Berlin, is typical of the age. He is all will and brain, and sternly represses the sensuous side of his nature. His fertility is amazing. He has made himself a name in chamber-music and symphony and is now succeeding in opera. He is the most uncompromising of ascetics and makes no sacrifices to grace or charm. His quartets and other chamber-music proclaim the dogma of linear counterpoint. Very recently, in vivid contrast to his former work, he has developed an almost grotesque passion for dance-forms, another indication of his close touch with modern tendencies. His work has intensely impressive moments which are significant in the history of musical development. Hitherto he has set his will against his own natural joy in music and there are long arid stretches in his compositions; but he has a very definite place in modern German music. Eduard Erdmann is a member of the same circle, talented, *naïf* and yet doctrinaire. He has still to find an original style and it is a defect of his peculiar quality that the search should be long.

After a long career as a classic-romantic pianoforte virtuoso, Artur Schnabel has declared for Schönberg, and in middle life is beginning to attract attention as a composer. He is unquestionably sincere, a speculative strain mingling with the musicianship innate in his Austrian blood. As artist and as *bürger* his nature is divided, and he bears an essential resemblance to Schönberg. Criticism of the past, a sense of the need for renewal in music, a love of chamber-music, a devotion to essentials, a dislike of the commonplace, all struggle for expression in the work of a man learned and poetic but not free of sophistry. His latest and little-known creation is a solo violin sonata, non-sensuous, lacking in imagination, but full of *ethos* and character. His speculative trend accords with that of the younger musicians and increases his influence with them.

Erwin Lendvai, a Hungarian, is a remarkable composer.

He began as a thorough-going modern, came later under Puccini's influence in Milan, and finally rejected modernism in favour of the purity and peace of the older music. He is opposed to chromaticism and unusual harmonies, and sets out to rid his score of unnecessary padding. His best work is for men's, women's and mixed choirs.

James Simon and Hugo Leichtentritt, students of musical science, are unable to throw off the weight of their learning when they attempt composition. Paul Graener, who has composed an effective setting to Christian Morgenstern's *Galgenlieder*, and Walter Braunfels, whose *Te Deum* is much in demand, are musicians of a moderate school. Braunfels is interested in vocal music and seeks to bridge the gulf between it and instrumental music, a result to be achieved only by the sacrifice of a part of the conquests of modernism. Heinrich Kaminski represents a milder form of polyphony, a return to Beethoven's middle period; his chamber-music and church-music is beginning to find a place on concert programmes.

Philipp Jarnach represents modern music at its maturity. He was born in Paris of Spanish parentage and acquired a grounding in technique at the Paris Conservatoire, but developed later on his own lines. After beginning a successful career in Paris, he suddenly dropped all his activities there and went to Zurich where he attached himself to Ferruccio Busoni, who gave him encouragement and assistance. He now lives a somewhat solitary life in Berlin and keeps resolutely away from the musical *cliques*. His music is now definitely German and is a model of controlled daring. His first work of distinction is a quintet, a modern classic, in which he revitalises the variation form and avoids expressionist contractions. He is essentially non-sensuous and composes slowly, each work being the fruit of a long preparatory mental activity. As a result, each composition shows the composer at a new stage of development. One of his quartets is a summary of modern

music; the basis of tonality has been abandoned, but despite a surprisingly daring treatment of the linear phrase, its form and tone are subordinate to a ruling idea. Both creative impulse and speculative mind are wisely controlled.

The material resources of music are being enriched. Alois Hába, a Czech by birth but attached to the modern German school, works in quarter-tones and experiments in the construction of musical instruments. At present all this seems very laboured and the imaginative stimulus of quarter-tones has yet to be proved. Hába himself is undoubtedly more scientific than imaginative.

The Influence of Busoni

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Ferruccio Busoni devoted himself with praiseworthy energy to rousing German music from its inertia. Of Italian birth but of mixed race, he was spiritually akin to Bach and the German metaphysicians, though as an incomparable virtuoso and an enterprising conductor, he was the self-chosen advocate of everything new in French music from the days of Impressionism onward. As a composer, however, his trend was elsewhere.

His development as a creative musician was set about with difficulties. In the first place he had to forget much which he had learnt from the "feel of the keys" as an infant-prodigy; and secondly, like his model Liszt, his individuality was imperilled by his intensely sympathetic interpretation and arrangement of other people's work. Nevertheless his determination to produce really original work was unshakable, and despite his connection with the Musical *Entente* he was not content merely to follow any "movement" but dug down to secure foundations of his own. It must, however, be admitted

that, both as man and musician, he wavered between the two poles of society and solitude.

The problems and difficulties of the time are very clearly mirrored in Busoni. Quite consciously, and not without a suspicion of pose, he cultivated the spirit of Liszt in himself till he developed a kind of secondary personality. He certainly exemplified Liszt's saying "*génie oblige*," and in his readiness to help others, to share his artistic conquests without a thought of self-interest, he was the most idealistic composer of the age. The extraordinarily suggestive power of his art has given it a world-wide hearing and brought him disciples from all countries. Busoni was a veritable cultural power, the creator of a *dolce stil nuovo*, in the artistic world. He had the rare capacity for approaching both interpretative music and original composition on a higher level, for expressing a new synthesis of arts with music as starting-point and as goal.

Something of Faust in his character, however, prevented his approach from being perfectly direct, but he never followed the car of Dionysius. The influence of Bach was very powerful, but although Busoni cultivated polyphony with the formal skill of a true Latin, he was able to make it express his period, his individuality, and the modern heightened sense of tone-colour. In all his work, from the *Konzertstück* to the phenomenal Concerto with choir of male voices and the *Indian Fantasia*, there is a superfluity of virtuoso passages, but they are as it were transfigured, and the *Fantasia contrappuntistica* is unsurpassed of its kind. It shows Busoni's unique self-abandonment to the spirit of Bach, how he identified his creative imagination with that of the master. His Bach studies, his arrangement of the *Choral Preludes*, are but rungs in the ladder to original work. His own half-doubting mysticism leans upon Bach's strong faith. His manner of linking the fugues in the *Fantasia contrappuntistica*, of surrendering himself to dreamy tone-visions, veils the *chorale* —that great confession

of faith—in half-lights, yet he had power and mastery enough to mould the whole to an artistic unity; it is a remarkable demonstration of what mixed blood and lofty artistic expression can accomplish. Such works as *Berceuse élégiaque*, *Nocturne symphonique* and the *Sonatinas* are an attempt to find a new way of music, independent of contemporary movements. He was interested also in opera. In *Die Brautwahl* he made a fanciful and significant comedy out of Hoffmann's fantastic tale. It has at least one brilliant moment, the "Frog-Spawn" scene; but it is to be heard to-day only in the form of a concert-suite.

Busoni had an exploring mind and laid down a scheme of musical æsthetics which presupposes the enrichment of music by third- and quarter-tones, a doctrine which he was himself naturally unable to put in practice. Moreover he sought a way back to artistic *naïveté*, to instinct, to a new classicism. In this spirit, he has revived the *commedia dell' arte*. *Turandot* and *Arlecchino* are his tributes to an operatic art at which he secretly laughed; he had no faith in it, though he would have liked to achieve success in it. When he died [1] he was engaged, in accordance with the Faust in his nature, on the composition of a *Doctor Faust*, for which he had been his own librettist.

America

America, in the course of becoming the world's banker, has not stood altogether aside from Europe's artistic interests. Till latterly she was little more than a gigantic market for European music, but the artists who visit her shores for the sake of her dollars have gradually created a musical *milieu*. The number of such visitants has enormously increased recently, partly on account of the war, and the most

[1] 27th July, 1924.

enterprising of them find a paradise there. There is certainly no lack of response; the public ear is becoming educated and criticism has the best material in the world on which to exercise its stripling powers. The standard of taste is rapidly improving. There is, however, a dark side to the tremendous business organisation of art. The very superfluity of excellence in the performance of the best music by the best artists and orchestras (for the most part under German conductors or under the influence of German musicians) leads to musical satiety, whereas collectedness and quiet are the *sine qua non* of all true creative activity. The great music of Germany was created in stillness, not in the hubbub of the stock market.

America is eager to be rid of her European teachers, of which Germany is the chief, but she is also determined to make the best use for herself of the resources which come to her from the Old World. It is clear that politics have affected her musical judgment, and that she is willing to be guided by the Musical *Entente*; but it is, of course, very necessary for her—since she has not a long musical culture of her own—to take what is good, wheresoever found, from the various musical movements of the day.

The American spirit, which now demands a musical life of its own, is very difficult to define; it loves show and excitement, is uninterested in abstractions, is dominated by money, and is only beginning to entertain the notion of taste in art. Feminine influence is everywhere a suggestive and sustaining power in music, but in America it is particularly strong, both for good and evil. It must not, however, be forgotten that a deeply ethical sense persists amidst the scramble for dollars in America, and that there is a great deal of public spirit. A religious tendency combats the apparently predominant materialism. The ethical value of music is recognised and from this point of view it will have rich resources to draw upon; in the meantime excellent orchestras, formed

with great rapidity, are engaged on the work of spreading symphonic culture.

Romanticism found an echo in America, evoking writers of world-wide renown such as Walt Whitman, Edgar Allan Poe and Mark Twain; and on the musical side development has been slow but unmistakable. MacDowell was the first American musician to win name and fame. He caught the tone of German Romanticism to which his studies at Leipzig gave a technical basis. Romantic tone was suitably and charmingly coloured in Grieg's provincially inspired music, and the moment when nationalism was pouring new wine into old bottles seemed to MacDowell a favourable one for making an American contribution to world music. During his American tour, Dvořák had attempted to express the spirit of the country in European music, and there is a European echo also in MacDowell's *American Idylls*.

America at present is merely non-European; it is not itself a distinct nationality and claims no racial unity, though the American spirit is unmistakable. If music is bound up with race and with a corporate inheritance, it accounts for the present lack of anything really strong in present-day American productions; but the mixture of race holds out promise for the future.

Much American music is derived from "nigger music" and yet at the same time expresses the American spirit, its *tempo*, activity, and state of tension. Deeper values can only be evoked by a gradually developing racial culture; and, in the meantime, "ragtime" catches the American atmosphere as a burning-glass concentrates the sun's rays. The American dance rhythm has swept the pleasure resorts of America and Europe, and its powerful sensuous suggestion is perhaps capable of changing the American *psyche*.

Negro music has been collected and Americanised, principally by Henry F. Gilbert, whose originality, raciness and

verve many of the so-called musicians of culture would be glad to borrow if they could.

It is useless to attempt to hurry matters, as the high-minded MacDowell, who sought a European education in the service of American music, soon discovered. He knew the value of recollection and withdrawal and offered opportunities for this to all artists in his studio-huts in the mountains of New Hampshire. This example was emulated by Mrs. Coolidge who built a "Temple of Art" in Berkshire, instituted a prize for chamber-music, and a yearly public festival. The result has been an improvement in technique and a raising of the average standard. Among the more prominent American musicians are the classic-romantic Edgar Stillmann Kelley, and the refined, if somewhat superficial, John Alden Carpenter and Charles T. Griffes. Cadman, Chadwick and John Powell are also genuinely American.

Europe continues to send its living tribute to America. Rubin Goldmark, nephew of the well-known Viennese composer, is a good Wagnerian; Leo Ornstein, a futurist; Ernest Bloch (formerly of Geneva), a true artist, whose Hebrew origin has been overlaid by Western influences, has been received with acclamation and has found his artistic home in America. His music-drama, *Macbeth*, has been performed in Paris. There is a very genuine and a very racial element in both his chamber-music and his *Schelomo*. He is super-national in his desire to contribute his Jewish gifts to the whole. Like others he has experienced Russian and French influences, traces of which are to be found in his technique and tone-colour; but they contribute to the expression of racial emotion found in the long melodious breathing, the quiet phrasing. They express, too, the longing of an idealist for perfection. The spirit which inspires this music has not yet, however, found a technique perfectly adapted to its needs. Charles M. Loeffler, an Americanised Alsatian, has done

markedly original work in *A Pagan Poem*, and may be regarded as the harbinger of the future American music. There is still much to be hoped from the influence of "jazz." In the form of dance-music, it has conquered the world only too completely. Paul Whiteman is now experimenting with it as a basis of concert-music, but the saxophone as leading melodic instrument is beginning to seem tiresome and only the future can prove whether "jazz" can be idealised without loss of freshness.

We have now reviewed the part played by each nationality in wrestling with the musical difficulties of the period. The business interest is dominant, and the big musical publishers exercise more control than people are willing to believe, though a rapid survey of the musical "great powers" with all their resources of advertisement and organisation should convince them. At times it may seem as though music were produced for business reasons alone, but the business man is nevertheless indispensable and may be useful if he is not allowed the sole control of art.

CHAPTER XIV

SOME ASPECTS OF MODERN MUSIC

Our survey has comprised a mixed company of composers of many lands and peoples, some of them, no doubt, insincere or second-rate; yet one cannot watch all this wide-spread and intense artistic activity, the younger men groping towards the new dawn of music through mists of experiment and apparent chaos, without a sense of participation and intense interest. Every influence which makes for union must be used to combat the racial and national hatreds which separate the artist from his brother artist. Such union is the goal towards which the best minds of the present day are striving by various and often apparently conflicting means. It is the one way which can lead mankind through difficulties, confusion and irresolution to a higher kind of simplicity, to a new and better convention. The dominance of "charm," which undermined and finally destroyed rhythmic strength and left music colourful but superficial, must be combated and music must once more become "pure" music, expressionist not representational, balanced, sensitive and yet strong, possessing a new *melos*, a new rhythm and a new form. Charm, while ceasing to be dominant, will not be excluded; it will have its place in new form founded on creative will, a deeper and more sincere development of the art.

With the consciousness before us of the general aim of music we come to consider the several branches of the art in their various phases. All show symptoms of decay and all need renewal.

The particular branch of music which has suffered most

change in the present stress is opera. From the time of Wagner, as we have seen, its very existence has been constantly threatened, but to-day its condition is more than ever critical. This is due to the tendency towards deeper and more "absolute" music which regards opera, a bastard sprung from the union of music with action, as a very superficial and unworthy form of a great expressionist art. Schönberg's attempt at operatic "expressionism" deprived an essentially "expansive" musical *genre* of all meaning. Most musicians, however, do not adopt so extreme a position and are ready to admit that music, although it should never be a mere reflection of outward events, has a legitimate correspondence with corporeality and may be a mediator of the sensuous and palpable; to exclude such possibilities is to lose elements of real value. On such a theory of exclusion, Busoni, who is not, as it happens, an expressionist, denies absolutely that any difference between theatrical and concert music exists in the classical masters. Busoni's speculative mind is so much stronger than his instincts that the latter are only operative in unguarded moments; he regards the musical score as the one important feature in opera and is ready to sacrifice words, action and plot in the interests of the music. The love-duet is discarded as an unnecessary device, the erotic element, according to this composer, being no concern of art, whatever its part in life. It is interesting to see how this musician with so much of Faust in his personality, who holds that opera is the most universal form of art—literature, acting, poetry and music in one—attempts, at least theoretically, to purge it of objectivity and to make it "pure" art.

So much for æsthetics; but the actual connection of music with action and words has become a practical problem which is being tackled in various ways. In the non-sensuous trend of modern music, opera is bound to suffer; it cannot be wholly spiritualised.

The German nature has always been inimical to realism in acting, and the symphonic orchestra was an attempt to go beyond the hard-and-fast objectivity of the stage. This tendency, indeed, is to be found in all nations with a traditional musical culture, and not only in Germany. Everywhere there has been an effort to overcome the crass objectivity of the theatre by the spiritual power in music, although it is interesting to note that in Germany various attempts have been made to atone by extreme theatricality for the metaphysical outlook, which has come to be regarded as original sin in the German opera-composer.

Since Verdi, behind whose marvellous sense of the theatre lay three generations of non-metaphysical operatic development, there has been but one who has in any degree shared his skill, and that is Puccini, a lesser man than Verdi, but the only genuine opera-composer of our day.[1] His song never fails to conform to the *tempo* of the stage; he grasps the dramatic situation non-symphonically (realising the situation as drama, not as symphony) and calculates his effects, assisted by a real understanding of the theatre. It is, however, natural that this type of opera should arouse the hostility of those who desire music to become increasingly a vehicle of the unseen and the inexpressible. Among these are the more consistent of Debussy's school. Richard Strauss's many operatic innovations appear to have led to nothing.

There are two opposing tendencies in present-day opera. One regards words and action as a hindrance to spirituality and aims at "pure" art; the other regards words and action as on the contrary an assistance to music. The first position is adopted by more subtle, the second by simpler, natures.

The human voice is the strongest obstacle to the absolute spiritualisation of opera. It is intimately connected with the body and its limitations, and is a perpetual advocate of the

[1] Puccini died (at Brussels) on 29th November, 1924.

sensuous. There is moreover an inexhaustible supply of singers, all eager to exercise their natural gift, almost forcing themselves upon the opera-composer, who, if he belongs to the simpler school and is instinctively musical, is glad enough to employ them.

The composer who is untroubled by modern problems also likes sensational dramatic treatment, and looks for it in his choice of libretti. He will take a suitably theatrical piece whether or not it seems to demand musical treatment. "Naturalism" in opera comes to mean the commonplace and the *bourgeois*. These are Puccini's methods, although he never forgets that music must have some place in opera! The inadequacy of such a conception of opera is clear.

Besides the Italian masters of this school are such as D'Albert and Wolfgang von Waltershausen, who wrote the libretto of his own *Colonel Chabert*, after Balzac, but added no very effective music to the theatrically effective text and was content with its "staginess." Ignaz Waghalter's *Mandragola* is better work, and although Von Eger's version of Machiavelli's text seems an unpromising subject for a composer, he has suited his pretty music remarkably well to its highly-seasoned wit. Jan Brandts-Buys, a native of Holland and a capable and pleasing musician, has absorbed the spirit of modern harmony; his *Tailors of Schönau*, though not powerful and somewhat monotonous, relying principally on dramatic "points," is an engaging piece of work. Julius Bittner, of Vienna, whose technique is unequal to his innate musicianship, strikes an effective note in *Das höllisch Gold*, the libretto for which he wrote himself with a keen eye for the stage. In France there is a tendency to exclude pathos and solemnity from opera, in accordance with which Alfred Bruneau goes to Zola for inspiration and has composed *Messidor*, while Henri Février turns not to the symbolic but to the realistic side of Maeterlinck as expressed in *Monna Vanna*. Janáček,

a Moravian successor of Dvořák and Smetana, has attempted to unite racial and sensuous emotion in *Jeji Pastorkyňa* (*Her Stepdaughter*).

Nevertheless the demand for sensationalism is decreasing and the German-Italian Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari's *Le donne curiose* and *I quattro rusteghi* are like echoes from the remote past. He lays on his colours in a classical manner, slightly modified by Wagnerianism. In the search for a bigger public success, he turned "realist" and composed *The Jewels of the Madonna*, but afterwards repented in *The Secret of Susanna* which suggests the caprice of a modern Mozartian. *Verismo* has its German supporters, including Paul Graener, whose operas *Don Juans letzte Abenteuer* (*Don Juan's Last Adventure*) and *Theophano* are delicate pieces of work, and Walter Braunfels is the composer of a pleasant opera on Aristophanes' *Birds*, the wording of the libretto suggesting a blend of the *Meistersinger* and the *Ariadne* of Strauss.

The above is no more than a selection of operas and composers of the unproblematic school. They have their points, but are for the most part doomed to the wastepaper basket. The work is hybrid, deriving from the instinct for a "strong" situation or from a liking for literary qualities in a text. There is no attempt to establish the connection between action and music on a new basis, nor any wish to be independent of the human voice or a full orchestra. Something, however, renders them ineffective, even in their own simple *genre*, and that is the lack of sensuous vigour in the music. This brings us back to Schreker and Korngold. It is not by chance that the two Viennese are more successful than their contemporaries of the same straightforward school. Schreker probes the depths of eroticism and writes his own *macabre* and pensive libretti, but *Das Spielwerk und die Prinzessin* (*Princess and Musical Box*), the *Gezeichneten* (*The Branded*) and *Der Schatzgräber* (*Treasure-Seeker*) do not fulfil the pro-

mise of *Der Ferne Klang* (*The Distant Sound*). They are the result of an artistic compromise, a blend of *naïveté* and refinement; full of inspiration, yet lacking the stamp of individuality; yet even so, they have a certain value.

Korngold is the only present-day operatic composer who comes near to establishing a balance between the various elements of his art. He alone gives song its full due, supporting it by a rich and masterly orchestration, and he alone since Puccini has the courage and ability to carry traditional opera to its logical conclusions.

Debussy saw the problems of opera, dealt with them in his own way, and left them to future musicians in a new form. His solution consisted in renunciation—renunciation of any strong emphasis in the union of music and action, and renunciation of a sensuous interpretation of words in music. Recitative becomes litany and the music of *Pelléas* is a subdued reflection of the older form of opera.

No one could have continued upon these lines, not even Debussy himself. The problem was next taken up with great enthusiasm by the Italians who, recognising that Debussy had pressed the spiritualisation of opera to its limits, did not attempt to go further in that direction, but were equally determined to abandon pure *bel-canto* opera which they had come to regard as a vulgar caricature of the drama.

The whole connection between drama and opera is in question. If the love-motive—or even the love-duet—is disallowed, what possibilities remain? The Italians had at last ceased to be satisfied with pleasant and thoughtless facility and attacked the problem in various ways. Of the old school there remained Zandonai, whose *Francesca da Rimini* is indigenous Italian opera on a somewhat higher plane; Alaleona, whose *Mirra* is of the same type; Italo Montemezzi, whose *L'Amore dei*

tre Re shows a feeble eclecticism; Franco Alfano, whose work from *Resurrection* to *Leggenda di Sakuntala* is a compromise between refinement and broad effect; and Pietro Mascagni, unusually gifted but deficient in musical culture.

In contrast to these are two composers who aim definitely at operatic expressionism, Francesco Malipiero and Ildebrando Pizzetti, both seeking inspiration in seventeenth-century Italian music. Malipiero has been influenced by French impressionism and post-impressionism, avoids *bel-canto* and is boldly experimental, whereas Pizzetti is an Italian of the Italians and faces the problem from that standpoint alone. Malipiero's attitude to the drama is clearly indicated in his *Sette Canzoni*. He regards the union of song and action in opera as a radical evil, and the usual connection between words and music, refined upon as it has been by successive composers, is contrary to his sense of drama. His plan is to separate song from representation on the stage and to abolish recitative entirely. *Pantea* is a symphonic drama for a dancer and a hidden choir. In *Sette Canzoni* the action is reduced to a few simple, disconnected scenes. A kind of folk-song accompanies pantomimic acting, the orchestra suggesting emotional atmosphere. The work has been produced in Italy and in Paris. It is not powerful in a theatrical sense but has distinct poetic charm of its own.

Pizzetti has expressed himself fully in *Fedra*. The music arises out of the action which is, however, so thoroughly assimilated by the composer that the song becomes truly "expressionist," the orchestra supporting it. It is a modern Italian version of Monteverdi's ideas and is sincere and distinguished work. The libretto of *Fedra* (as of Zandonai's very different *Francesca da Rimini*) is from a tragedy by Gabriele d'Annunzio, and it is clear that this master of word-music appeals readily to composers.

Operatic technique, the most exacting of all techniques, has influenced both simple and advanced opera and has served rather to expose than to conceal the difficulties of this branch of music. These turn chiefly upon the question as to whether the connection between words and music is or is not in the last resort artistically possible. Many perceive the essential disunion and though they are ready to abandon themselves temporarily to the intoxication of *bel-canto* they are equally ready to sympathise with new experimental work. In the absence of an immediate solution of the difficulties, compromise is perhaps inevitable, but the modern spirit rebels against it. A suggested solution is that the singer should carry the main burden in opera, expressing pure emotion in absolute freedom from the restraint of words, and acting only to the extent of indicating very simple incident as he sings.

Operatic composers of the latest school cut the knot by dismissing song and seeking other means of dramatic expression. Pantomime, culminating in dance, attracts contemporary musicians, but the problem must become very pressing, the tendency to absolute emotional expression very urgent, before we accept the ballet as the one way out of our difficulties.

The use of pantomime by Dohnányi, Korngold or Klenau is symptomatic for German-speaking countries. The *rapprochement* between France and Russia gave rise to the egregious heresy that the ballet is the solution of the operatic problem, when it is in fact a mere evasion. Nevertheless the cult of the ballet is a proof that the modern musician will be content with no compromise but will press the matter to its conclusion.

The ballet can create a very vivid impression by its blend of mind and senses, but it cannot express pure emotion as song does. Its intimate union of music and gesture is, however, very satisfying to "expressionist" ideals. In the hands of Debussy, Ravel, Dukas, Roussel, Satie, Milhaud and many other modern French masters the ballet is an intellectual triumph.

As it comes from Russia, the land of its rebirth, it is an expression of absolutely vital and significant physical perfection which warms the chill blood of an old tradition and fills musicians with expressionistic impulses. Sensuousness opposes intellectualism with the allurement of splendid trappings, feasts of colour, and bodily gesture, but the latter has its revenge by introducing an element of symbolism into this orgy of the primitive. Bartók's *The Wooden Prince* is an example of ballet thus intellectualised; at the time when Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Princess* appeared, it would have been hard to foresee such developments as *Petruschka*, *Sacre du Printemps* or Prokofief's *Chout*.

Apart from the claims of the ballet, however, it is becoming clear that development is leading us away from the old form of opera. The play with occasional music is in itself destructive to the older art. Such emotionally suggestive settings to plays as those of Humperdinck, Tiessen and Reznicek achieve a successful synthesis of fact and fancy seldom to be found in opera.

The difficulty of getting words and music to cohere has been the ruin of oratorio. A mixture of church and theatre is no longer to the taste of the public. During a period of secularisation and of the spread of concert-music, the Church has lost its prestige with the masses, while the theatre seeks only to please. Franz Prohàska's *Frühlingsfeier*, the work of a musical eclectic, is a hybrid composition, as is also Klose's *Der Sonne Geist* which is too big for the chosen form. Certain works of this kind by César Franck and Elgar will retain an honourable place beside Brahms's *German Requiem*, but the modern man expresses his religious sense in very different artistic forms, which though they may seem more worldly, are yet truly consecrated to the search for absolute truth.

Musical melodrama is another hybrid form sprung from the uneasy union of words and music. Robert Schumann's

Manfred and Bizet's *Arlésienne* are big works in this style which affords a kind of refuge for the operatic composer from the exigencies of opera. He subordinates himself to the text, while flattering himself that he transcends it. Melodrama as an element in opera still survives, but as a separate *genre*, as in Schillings' *Hexenlied*, Strauss's *Enoch Arden* and Oskar Fried's *Auswanderer*, the less said about it the better.

It is hard to say what style of music the modern musician prefers. He hovers between the wildest spirit of farce and hermit-like austerity and appears to find both objectivity run riot and the most absolute abstractions equally indispensable to his artistic life. He finds that an orgy of syncopated nigger tunes leaves him the readier for pure emotional expressionism.

One cannot avoid seeing that the trend of musicians the world over is away from objective forms and towards song and chamber-music, the two most "absolute" types. They are common ground for those otherwise far apart, and the German composer with his natural desire for the depths, not the superficialities, of musical art, feels that the whole world begins to share his point of view. No dream of the past but a true vision of the future awaits fulfilment.

German song in its "romantic" manifestation has had a wonderfully pervasive influence. It has modified the French character of much French song and has touched the sensuous song of Italy with its own mysticism, while the Russian has adapted it to his own strange, melancholy, inflexible, Slavonic soul, and even the Englishman finds in it a remnant of kinship in feeling with the German, though he will allow no expansiveness.

Song, too, has passed through a crisis, precipitated by *Tristan*. Its simplicity has been lost in the attempt to interpret the poet's meaning word for word. Its essential "littleness"

has been injured by the symphonic poem. Hugo Wolf, Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler have wrought a great change in German song which as orchestral song has lost much of its modest charm. Schönberg gets to the heart of the poet's meaning, but carries song beyond the scope of the human voice; and his disciples do the same. Joseph Marx, Erich J. Wolff, Tiessen, Leichtentritt, Jürgens, James Simon, Zilcher, Graener, Weingartner, Kovalski, Marschalk, Trunk and Edmund Schröder write good songs, while Gisella Selden-Goth and the amazing Grete Zieritz are worthy of note. Otmar Schoeck is a post-romantic; and from time to time the imitative Conrad Ansorge gives us one of his restrained songs.

There is a strong trend to lyricism, particularly in Germany. The influence of *Tristan* hinders the development of melodic line. Melodic eccentricities are not uncommon, but the discovery of a new tonality, since it can only be found in a change of spirit, is a difficult task.

In France, Henri Duparc, Chausson, Gabriel Fauré and Darius Milhaud; in Italy, Malipiero, Pizzetti, Respighi, Casella and Castelnuovo-Tedesco; in England, Eugene Goossens and Arnold Bax, are trying to transcend intellectualism in pure song. Philipp Jarnach is very individual in this branch of music as in others, while Pizzetti composes exquisite songs of the Renaissance type combined with modern technique.

The longing for the absolute can hardly find satisfaction in song and is the more urgently pursued in chamber-music. In spite of Debussy, Ravel, and the magnificent creative efforts of that unique pianist, Busoni, who far surpasses the tonal effects of Liszt, the piano is still the instrument of romanticism. Pianoforte concertos are still occasionally written. The purest forms of chamber-music best express the modern spirit and never before has so much chamber-

music been composed and performed. We have seen the activity of Debussy's successors in this *genre*, the new participation of England and America and the Italian revival. In Germany, where tradition is strong, Reger began the movement which led to Schönberg's absolute expressionism. All the younger German composers are devoted to this branch of music where tone is at its most transparent, where the texture hides nothing, and the essential finds expression unimpeded. Max Reger turns towards that singing instrument, the violin, although without much convincing power. He gave some animation to the sonata for solo violin.

A new counterpoint fashions the tone which is no longer to be either beautiful or full, but is to be an incarnation of content in the framework of a new form. The orchestra too reaches out to such a spiritualisation and deepening of tone and a new symphony is coming to birth. Wagnerian "doublings" are no longer employed. The solo instrument is to be given perfect freedom of expression and the levelling effect of a large array of instruments is to be abolished; a totality is to announce with free motion the most extreme individuality.

Audiences the world over still love the intoxicating orchestras of Wagner and Strauss, and the veiled charm of Debussy; but there is bound to be either a definite reaction or else indifference. By tonal or atonal methods, musicians are searching for a fresh clarity.

CHAPTER XV

MUSIC AND THE AGE

Our wanderings have brought us within sight of a clearing, but many a mile of thorny scrub yet lies between us and open country; for these days of universal social convulsion have strengthened the material and spiritual forces which are the perpetual enemies of music.

Among these hostile forces of a material kind are politics, which stand for cunning, convention and tenacity; technique, which would reduce life to a formula; and commerce, which considers nothing beyond the best means of extracting immediate profit from whatever lies nearest to hand. Political aims, as a matter of course, leave music entirely out of account. One can see in European history that music was victimised by politics till, as a professional art, itself became political and thereby crippled its own proper powers. So strong, however, is the musical instinct in Germany that, though politically subordinate to the spirit of militarism, it has yet preserved a life of its own. Even in Germany, however, technique and commercial considerations have proved destructive to art. The Great War, a tremendous militarist and commercial contest, has strengthened the forces of materialism and encouraged the worldly-wise doctrine of the uselessness of the arts.

Certain spiritual forces inimical to music have their roots in the modern temperament. The frenzied speed of modern existence bears heavily on the artist, who in any circumstances is temperamentally slightly abnormal, and it drives him to resort to all kinds of artistic stimuli to rouse his overstrained nerves from the lethargy of exhaustion. Such conditions are not unfavourable to certain kinds of artistic work. The *Scherzo*,

for instance, subtly intellectual in colour and rhythm, is a veritable mirror of the period. Among the Latinised Anglo-Saxon races the grotesque possibilities of the *Scherzo* have been increased and it expresses a combination of cool intellect and nervous sensibility in the artist.

On the other hand, the difficulties in the way of pure emotional expression appear almost insurmountable Such expression is an intrinsic necessity for the German and Austrian nature. There has been an attempt to enthrone Bruckner and Mahler among the old gods of emotional music; but we have already examined the extent of their achievements and have found that their type of emotional expression can never be universally valid. A type of mysticism, prevalent at the moment amongst German religious sects, is favourable to a cult of Bruckner. Little of Mahler's work is likely to survive, although his genius was prophetic of much in modern music. Both composers, however, meet a certain demand in present-day Germany and, assisted by fashion and the herd instinct, are preparing the public for the more abstract and spiritual type of music to come. Moreover, the interest shown by modern musicians in the purely tonal art of Bruckner and Mahler goes some way to disprove the theory that the elements of music are quite exhausted. The moderns are also here faced with the fact that union of vocal and instrumental music, difficult as they may think it, was at one time achieved.

As a result of the great political and social upheaval, the gambling spirit is very prevalent, more especially in Germany. It is nourished by the prevailing uncertainty, by commercial and business fluctuations, and a sure basis of life is urgently needed. Under such conditions, convincing emotional expression in art is not to be expected. Musical lyricism of a great order is the product of calmness and peace, the calmness of the *adagio*, free from sentimentality. Both lack of new musical

material and the modern artist's habit of mind demand condensation, to achieve which composure and quiet meditation are very necessary; but the business side of musical production drags everything into glaring publicity, leaving no room for such qualities. No doubt it will gradually dawn upon the world that mass production in art is bad business and that the merely imitative and mediocre performer is a thoroughly unprofitable form of musician.

Democracy in all nations begins to realise the use of music as a socially educative influence. In England and in America it is becoming recognised as a humanising and uplifting power, while in Germany since the end of the war the government has set out a great scheme for universal musical education. Paul Bekker's very drastic schemes for German musical life are excellent in parts, but not practicable as a whole. Leo Kestenberg has also sketched a plan for thorough-going musical re-organisation. In various ways it is proposed that the ground shall be fertilised in the hope of making it bear a crop equal to the great German music of old. The ethical value of such a training in an age of frivolous amusements is not overlooked, nor its probably beneficial effect on artistic technique; but it is well to remember that no artificial cultivation of musicians can replace the spontaneous love of music which has characterised the German people in the past. There is danger to art at present from the application to it of conceptions proper to the workshop or factory—in a word, of the business outlook. The Philistines are upon us unawares.

Both the masses and society may play an important part in helping to form an artistic *milieu*, but the world is made and unmade by minorities, and whatever value the sociological bases of music may possess, it is genius alone, unforeseen, fantastic, irrational even, ever taking the age by surprise, which can bring about great artistic revolutions.

According to the philosophy of Leopold von Wiese, a syn-

thesis of *eros* and mind is a vital necessity; one may hope to see it achieved in the world of music. Meanwhile, unfortunately, the cult of mediocrity is carried on by a frivolous musical pseudo-science, and a number of exaggerated journalistic monographs in praise of the great ones of our day tend to destroy all confidence in criticism. There are, however, a few genuinely artistic periodicals which help to restore it and form an intellectual stronghold.

How can artistic simplicity be restored? Exotic music as ground out by the gramophone of musical science is a make-shift and not the real thing. Oriental music, mere melody without harmony or polyphony, cannot be ingrafted without prejudice to our advanced art. There is, indeed, no rough-and-ready solution to our problems, however feverish the energy with which we attack them; and this applies particularly to Germany which needs a long breathing time before it can find itself once more.

The ghost of Oswald Spengler walks, but we need not fear the omen. The wells of German music do not always run full, but they will not dry up.

Music surges with the emotional and nervous storms of the time. The present morbid dread of the commonplace will soon be forgotten and nothing can take from the younger composers their faith in the ultimate success of their efforts. These are not entirely destructive. They reach out to Bach and are captivated by Beethoven's "posthumous" style, while almost all schools, those of Debussy, Strauss and Busoni, worship Mozart. They seek a synthesis of subtlety and simplicity, of mind and sense, and although the anarchic forces of atonality are great, a new, purified music, perfectly balanced, will surely be found. Music awaits the co-ordinating genius who will bring her long travail to a triumphant end.

FINIS

INDEX

Alaleona, Domenico, 201, 229
Albeniz, Isaac, 207
d'Albert, Eugen, 76*f.*, 227
Alfano, Franco, 230
Andreae, Volkmar, 148
d'Annunzio, Gabriele, 170, 200, 230
Ansorge, Conrad, 234
Atterberg, Kurt, 205
Aubert, Louis, 173

Bach, Johann Sebastian, 11*f.*, 15, 26, 40, 52, 82, 84*f.*, 116*ff.*, 122, 124, 166, 181, 213, 217*f.*, 239
Bahnsen, Julius, 87
Bahr, Hermann, 56
Balakiref, 99
Balzac, Honoré de, 227
Banville, Théodore de, 161
Bartók, Béla, 203*f.*, 232
Baudelaire, Pierre Charles, 159, 162, 167
Baussnern, Waldemar von, 148
Bax, Arnold, 193, 234
Beecham, Sir Thomas, 190
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 6*ff.*, 12*ff.*, 16*ff.*, 21*ff.*, 33, 40*f.*, 51, 82*f.*, 103, 105, 109, 117, 119, 124, 152, 156, 166, 181, 216, 239
Bekker, Paul, 238
Berg, Alban, 212
Berger, Wilhelm, 117
Berlioz, Hector, 6*ff.*, 15, 18*f.*, 25, 31*ff.*, 44, 52, 87, 106, 108, 113, 127, 133, 146*f.*, 151, 153, 171
Berners, Lord, 192
Bethge, Hans, 113
Bierbaum, Julius Otto, 134
Bittner, Julius, 227
Bizet, Georges, 76, 101, 233
Blech, Leo, 74
Bliss, Arthur, 192
Bloch, Ernest, 222
Boehe, Ernst, 148
Bordes, Charles, 153, 207
Borodin, 99
Bossi, Enrico, 199
Boughton, Rutland, 194
Brahms, Johannes, 25*ff.*, 40*f.*, 78*ff.*, 89*f.*, 116–118, 121*f.*, 124*ff.*, 133*f.*, 154*f.*, 232
Brandts-Buys, Jan, 227
Braunfels, Walter, 216, 228
Bridge, Frank, 194
Bruckner, Anton, 40, 79–85, 86*ff.*, 106, 237
Bruneau, Alfred, 156, 227
Bülow, Hans von, 41, 80
Bungert, August, 74
Busoni, Ferruccio, 216–219, 225, 234 239

Cadman, 222
Cahier, Mme., 113
Carpenter, John Alden, 222
Casals, Pablo, 207
Casella, Alfredo, 198*f.*, 234
Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario, 199*ff.*, 234
Chabrier, Emmanuel, 156, 173, 207
Chadwick, 222
Charpentier, Gustave, 167
Chateaubriand, François René, 6
Chausson, Ernest, 156, 234
Chevillard, 44
Chopin, Frédéric, 4*f.*, 9, 16*f.*, 30, 97, 161
Colonne, 44
Coolidge, Mrs., 222
Cornelius, Peter, 74
Couperin, François, 5, 161
Cui, Cesar, 99

Dargomijsky, 100, 157
David, Félicien, 101
Debussy, Claude, 45, 56*f.*, 123, 151–174, 175, 178, 180, 184, 189, 192, 195, 198, 207, 226, 229, 231, 234*f.*, 239
Degas, Edmond, 172
Dehmel, Richard, 134, 180
Delacroix, Paul, 6
Délibes, Leo, 101
Delius, Frederick, 188–190
Dent, Edward J., 195
Dohnányi, Ernst von, 117, 231
Dopper, Cornelius, 206

Dostoievsky, Fedor, 99, 105
Dovsky, Beatrice, 75
Dukas, Paul, 156, 168, 231
Duparc, Henri, 156, 234
Dvořák, Anton, 96, 117, 221, 227

Eaglefield-Hull, Dr. A., 195
Eger, von, 227
Elgar, Sir Edward, 118, 193, 232
Enescu, George, 208
Erdmann, Eduard, 215
Erich, Otto, 182
Ertel, Jean Paul, 148
Eulenberg, Herbert, 148

Falla, Manuel de, 207
Fauré, Gabriel, 155*f*., 168, 234
Fevrier, Henri, 227
Franck, César, 45, 154*ff*., 232
Franz, Robert, 134
Fried, Oskar, 233

Gasco, 201
Gautier, Théophile, 159
George, Stefan, 38, 181
Gilbert, Henry F., 221
" Gilbert and Sullivan," 192
Giordano, Umberto, 75
Giraud, Albert, 182
Gluck, Christoph, 18, 166
Goethe, J. W., 4, 18, 105, 112
Goetz, Hermann, 74
Gogh, Vincent van, 185
Goldmark, Rubin, 2 2
Goossens, Eugene, 19., 234
Graener, Paul, 216, 228, 234
Granados, Enrique, 207
Grieg, Edward, 100, 161, 205, 221
Griffes, Charles T., 222
Gross, E. Wilhelm, 212
Grun, James, 90*f*.
Guilmant, Alexandre, 153

Haas, Joseph, 125
Hába, Alois, 217
Habeneck, 6, 43
Halm, August, 80
Händel, Georg Friedrich, 28
Hauptmann, Gerhardt, 70
Hausegger, Siegmund von, 77, 148
Haydn, Josef, 29, 52, 96
Henckell, Karl, 134
Hiller, Adam, 124
Hindemith, Paul, 214
Hoffmann, E. Th., 219
Hoffmann, E. T. A., 53
Hoffmannsthal, Hugo von, 38, 141, 143, 145

Holbrooke, Joseph, 194
Holst, Gustav, 193*f*.
Honegger, Artur, 196
Huber, Hans, 148
Humperdinck, Engelbert, 74, 232

Ibsen, Hendrik, 70, 94
d'Indy, Vincent, 44, 153, 155*f*.
Ireland, John, 194
Ivogün, Maria, 144

Jacobsen, Jens Peter, 188
Janáček, Leos, 202, 227
Jarnach, Philipp, 216, 234
Jensen, Adolf, 134
Jirák, 203
Joachim, Josef, 41, 80
Juon, Paul, 125
Jürgens, 234

Kaminski, Heinrich, 216
Kandinsky, Vassily, 60
Kaun, Hugo, 148
Keller, Gottfried, 188
Kelley, Edgar Stillmann, 222
Kestenberg, Leo, 238
Kienzl, Hermann, 74
Kilpinen, Yrjö, 205
Klenau, Paul, 231
Klose, Friedrich, 86*ff*., 232
Kodály, 203*f*.
Korngold, Wolfgang, 210, 228*f*., 231
Kovalski, 234
Krenek, Ernst, 214
Křička, 202

Lalo, Édouard, 173
Laloy, Louis, 157
Lamartine, Alphonse de, 6
Lamoureux, 44, 156
Lanner, Josef, 102
Leichtentritt, Hugo, 216, 234
Lekeu, Guillaume, 155
Lendvai, Erwin, 215
Lerchenau, Ochs von, 143
Levi, Hermann, 69
Liliencron, 134
Liszt, Franz, 8*f*., 18*ff*., 23*f*., 30, 42, 87, 106, 120, 127, 129, 131, 134, 146, 154*f*., 161, 177, 217*f*., 234
Loeffler, Charles M., 222
Lortzing, Albert, 133
Louys, Pierre, 169

Macdowell, 221*f*.
Mackay, J. H., 134
Maeterlinck, Maurice, 159, 162, 168*f*., 227

Magnard, Albéric, 156
Mahler, Gustav, 34, 36, 56, 91, 102, 103–115, 137, 149, 169, 176*f.*, 198, 206, 234, 237
Makart, 210
Malibran, Marie, 30
Malipiero, Francesco, 199, 230, 234
Mallarmé, Stephen, 159, 162, 174
Manén, Joan, 207
Mann, Thomas, 92
Manuel, Roland, 197
Marschalk, 234
Martucci, Giuseppe, 117
Marx, Joseph, 234
Mascagni, Pietro, 75, 230
Massenet, Jules, 152, 154, 161, 167
Mattheson, Johann, 53
Maurus, Hrabanus, 112
Mendelssohn, Felix, 15, 29, 96, 126, 133
Mengelberg, Willem, 206
Messager, André, 155
Milhaud, Darius, 196*f.*, 231, 234
Mombert, Alfred, 87
Monet, Claude, 160, 172
Montemezzi, Italo, 229
Monteverdi, Claudio, 169, 200, 230
Mottl, Felix, 69, 87
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 13*f.*, 68, 98, 124, 128, 137, 142*f.*, 146, 166, 174, 228, 239
Mussorgsky, Modest Petrovich, 99*f.*, 157, 161, 191

Neumann, Angelo, 33
Nicodé, Jean, 148
Nielsen, Karl, 205
Nikisch, Artur, 41, 44
Noren, Gottlieb, 148
Novák, Vitězslav, 202

Ornstein, Leo, 222

Paganini, Niccolo, 8, 30
Palmgren, Selim, 205
Pfitzner, Hans, 37, 86–94, 103
Pierné, Gabriel, 156
Pijper, Willem, 206
Pizarro, 160
Pizzetti, Ildebrando, 199*ff.*, 230, 234
Poe, Edgar Allan, 221
Poulenc, Francis, 196*f.*
Powell, John, 222
Pratella, 198
Prohaska, Franz, 232
Prokofief, 232
Puccini, Giacomo, 75*f.*, 166*f.*, 169, 210*f.*, 216, 226*f.*, 229
Purcell, 194

Quilter, Roger, 194

Rameau, Jean Philippe, 45, 153
Rangström, Ture, 205
Ravel, Maurice, 173*f.*, 192, 195*f.*, 231, 234
Reger, Max, 37, 103, 119–125, 126, 131*f.*, 158, 206, 235
Respighi, Ottorino, 149, 198, 201, 234
Reuss, August, 88
Reznicek, E. N. von, 147*f.*, 232
Richter, Hans, 29, 69
Riemann, Hugo, 119
Rilke, Rainer Maria, 38
Rimsky-Korsakof, 99, 149, 157, 169
Ritter, Alexander, 74, 127
Rodenbach, Georges, 210
Roger-Ducasse, 173
Rolland, Romain, 163
Röntgen, Julius, 205
Ropartz, Guy, 156
Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, 162
Roussel, Albert, 156, 231
Różycki, Ludomir, 207
Rubinstein, Anton, 45
Rückart, 111

Sabata, de, 201
Saint-Saëns, Camille, 45, 154, 173
Salomon, 29
Samazeuilh, Gustave, 173
Santoliquido, 201
Satie, Erik, 157, 196, 231
Scheinpflug, Paul, 148
Schillings, Max von, 75, 77, 148, 233
Schmid, Johann Kaspar, 88
Schmidt, Franz, 210
Schmitt, Florent, 173*f.*
Schnabel, Artur, 41, 215
Schoeck, Otmar, 234
Schönberg, Arnold, 114, 175–183, 184*f.*, 187, 191, 195, 203, 212, 214*f.*, 225, 235
Schopenhauer, Artur, 87, 92
Schreker, Franz, 210*ff.*, 214, 228
Schröder, Edmund, 234
Schubert, Franz, 4*f.*, 23, 26, 53, 78, 83, 102, 175
Schumann, Robert, 4*f.*, 9, 15*ff.*, 78, 89*f.*, 99, 126, 197, 232
Scott, Cyril, 192
Selden-Goth, Gisella, 234
Setaccioli, 201
Shakespeare, William, 70, 74
Shaw, Martin, 194
Sibelius, Jean, 100, 204*f.*
Simon, James, 216, 234
Sinding, Christian, 78, 100

Sinigaglia, Leone, 201
Sisley, 160
Sjögren, 100
Smetana, Friedrich, 98, 228
Smyth, Dame Ethel, 194
Spengler, Oswald, 71, 239
Stanford, Sir Charles Villiers, 118
Stanislavsky, 70
Stenhammar, Wilhelm, 205
Straesser, Ewald, 117
Straube, Karl, 120
Strauss, Richard, 34*ff*., 44, 56, 102, 103, 123, 126–150, 151*f*., 166, 174, 178, 184, 190, 206, 210, 226, 228, 234*f*., 239
Stravinsky, Igor, 184*f*., 191*f*., 195*ff*., 199, 214
Suk, Joseph, 202
Szymanowski, Karol, 206

Taubmann, Otto, 118
Tchaikovsky, 98, 232
Telemann, Georg Philipp, 124
Thuille, Ludwig, 88
Tieck, Ludwig, 5
Tiessen, Heinz, 232, 234
Torrefranca, 198
Toscanini, 69, 197
Trunk, 234
Twain, Mark, 221

Unger, Hermann, 125

Vaughan-Williams, Ralph, 193
Verdi, Giuseppe, 73, 75, 226
Verhulst, 205
Verlaine, Paul, 159, 162, 174
Viotta, 205
Volbach, Fritz, 148
Vomáčha, 203
Vuillermoz, Émile, 173
Vycpálek, 203

Wagenaar, Johann, 206
Waghalter, Ignaz, 227
Wagner, Richard, 10, 13, 18*ff*., 29, 32*ff*., 36*ff*., 40, 42, 44, 53, 55, 67–78, 79*ff*., 87, 89*f*., 93*f*., 98, 104*ff*., 117, 122, 126*ff*., 133, 136, 138*ff*., 144, 146, 151*f*., 154*ff*., 159, 161*ff*., 169*f*. 174, 178*ff*., 191, 197, 205, 211, 225, 228, 235
Walter, Bruno, 113
Waltershausen, Wolfgang von, 227
Watteau, Antoine, 5
Weber, Carl Maria von, 18, 52
Webern, Anton von, 212
Weingartner, Felix von, 34, 44, 148, 234
Wellesz, Egon, 172, 212
Whiteman, Paul, 223
Whitman, Walt, 221
Wiese, Leopold von, 238
Wildbrunn, Helene, 71
Wilde, Oscar, 140
Wolf, Hugo, 78*f*., 122, 134, 234
Wolff, Erich J., 234
Wolf-Ferrari, Ermanno, 228
Wolzogen, Ernst von, 140
Wood, Sir Henry, 195

Zandonai, Riccardo, 201, 229
Zieritz, Grete, 234
Zilcher, 234
Zola, 227

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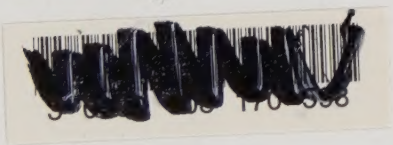

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